ENTERTAINMENT
Do own thing, make it big in int'l film fest, says HK curator

SPORTS
White Sox draw first blood in World Series

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Nigerian plane with 116 passengers aboard crashes

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The naked and the playing-dead

PHILIPPINE DAILY
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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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inquirer.net

Food program serves up fresh hope for poor kids

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

IN THIS COUNTRY GRIPPED BY POVERTY and hunger, hope is being served fresh and hot to the shivering rabbles of poor children.

Through a massive feeding program started by the Archdiocese of Manila, hope has come in the form of champorado, served cold.

Rubber-stamp image bugs consultative body

By Julius Lalicay Javellana

Bro. Mike, Hyatt 10 push snap election

Proposal not legal, says GMA lawyer

By Juliet Labog Javellana, Carla P. Gomez and Fe Zamora

TWO INFLUENTIAL religious leaders and opponents of President Macapagal-Arroyo are pushing for the holding of a presidential election in 2007 to end the political impasse.

Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and El Shaddai leader Bro. Mike Velarde are calling for a "snap election" via a single amendment to the Constitution, according to opposition lion Jovito Salonga (Nikoha B).

The Black and White Movement, which includes the so-called Hyatt 10, is urging Vice President Noli de Castro to take the reins of power from Ms Arroyo and head an advisory council on "transition president" until a special election is held in 2007.

Both proposals would effectively unseat the six-year term of the President. Ms Arroyo, who has only 10,000 votes on her side, has been accused of stealing the presidential election in 2004. She has denied rigging the polls.

Romulo Macalintal, a lawyer of Ms Arroyo's, said there was nothing in the Constitution that authorizes ousting short the President's term.

Calling on Ms Arroyo to step down but "save some embarrassment in asking her to resign, Macalintal said: "And if she agrees to my idea her term, she'll considered resigned, "he said.

Cardinal Archbishop Vidal Ramos has proposed that the Congress

WORRIED IN WINGS

As birds flock to its field, a farmer tills his land in Candaba, Pampanga, unaware of government efforts to monitor the entry of the avian flu virus into the country. Ed Mesaros, president of the Candaba Swamp Migratory Bird and Wildlife Foundation, believes the Philippines will be the last country to get the bird flu, if ever. (Story on Page A2.)

Erap elated over Cory's admission of mistake

By Marvin Bordadora, Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

TO COMMUNIST LEADER JOSE MARIA SISON, Cory Aquino, it was nothing less than a vindication. And it took two days.

That was how excited President Joseph Estrada's supporters received the news that Aquino, one of the leaders of the popular revolt that swept him out of Malacañang in 2001, had admitted to making a mistake in backing Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in his succession.

"I feel vindicated because Mr Aquino is a respected leader not only here but also internationally," Estrada told the reporters from his retreat in Tanay, Rizal, where he is being held under house arrest.

"She is well-respected and with an unblemished record in leadership," Estrada said.

Malacañang refused to be drawn into the controversy.

Apparently reacting to the statement made by Aquino and ousted leader Sen. Eddie Villanueva that, in effect, they had been wrong in supporting Ms Arroyo, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye could only express regret at "the failure of key critics to heed the call of religious leaders and the people for unity in national balancing."

"We shall not let divisive and counterproductive acts accomplish further, we will maintain our focus on our people's welfare and administration," Bunye said.

"I am elated," Estrada said, citing other statements regarding the election of his wife Luisa Ejercito and son Jinggoy Estrada in the Senate—in support his claim that he had been unjustly removed from office.

Speaking the other day to members of the black and white movement calling for the country's resignation, Aquino had said: "I plead guilty to the fact that I thought GMA would be a lesser alternative to Estrada."

Villanueva spoke of a similar regret at the same forum.

San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, another son of Estrada's, also welcomed the statements of Aquino and Villanueva.

"Those statements from those who opposed my father already vindicate him at this point," Ejercito said. "We have always believed history will vindicate President Estrada. I think it has started."

Birds star in show amid avian flu threat

By DJ Yap

THE STARS OF THE SHOW seemed, plaited and muddled, rode in a wooden and playpen basket, bill, covered each other, and picked up scrub.

One owns stood out as Anap Jobb.

But the stars of the Entrepreneurial Malaysia Gardens's Interactive Bird Show also had something to say about the ecosystem, natural habitats, animal rights and responsibilities ownership.

Starring in this hour-long production are blue and red, a cockatiel named Cockatoo, a macaw being basketball buddies and star-crossed lovers, and Leila, a white umbrella cockatoo who likes to ride on trolleys and throw kisses to fans.

And then there's Wacky, a raven who does a solo act, extolling Anap's story about the dietary crow who solves the problem of a narrow water pitcher by dropping pebbles and making the water rise.

The star of the avian cast is Chalo a pair of cockatoos, a flock of doves, a serpent eagle, a Philippine hawk, a handful of Wallaroo hens and a marching band of American mallards.

Children clapped and adults cheered, but the stars were content with a piece of fruit or a chunk of meat as reward for a job well done.

In a blend of entertainment and education, the Henry Ingrao Parks and Wildlife (NAPW) owner is playing host to the second season of the bird production by the Malagos Preservation Foundation Inc.

Said to be the first and only bird production bird show in the country, the room has been a big

Pink ribbon links survivors of breast cancer worldwide

By DJ Yap and Tarra V. Quismundo

UNTIL LEARNING THEY HAD breast cancer, an executive from Beijing and a business woman from Manila took a calmly evening out to be debriefed by a nurse who then encouraged to take turns their lives.

Wang Bao Ling, 39, tapped her foot impatiently and asked the doctor: "What should be done, and how soon can you be a?"

Carolyn Ritchiano, 40, on the other hand, joked about it with her husband: "Isn't cancer only for the rich?"

For all their display of courage, however, a little of

MARA, a 7-year-old Shih Tzu cocker spaniel, joins the "Walk for Breast Cancer" in Makati City (Story on Page A11.)

OFW cash reshapes Ilocos countryside

NOLASCO and Josephine Idao read the garden of a bungalow built and owned by Josephine's elder sister and husband, both based in California, in Barangay Biboco, Bauo, Ilocos Norte.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2005
Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

House row seen delaying '06 budget

By TJ Burgonio and Michael Lim Ubac

THE PASSAGE OF THE PROPOSED P1.053-TRILLION budget for 2006 could be further delayed due to the squabble brewing among the leadership of the House of Representatives, administration Sen. Ralph Recto warned yesterday.

"As it is, the passage of the budget is already delayed. But because of the squabble [over the House leadership], this will be further delayed," Recto, chair of the finance committee on ways and means, said in a phone interview.

Recto was referring to the political campaign launched by Pampanga 4th Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. to wrest control of the speakership from Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.

Recto said the possibility the Senate version of the proposed budget would be transmitted to the Senate by mid-November was getting slimmer by the day due to these developments.

"Unless we're able to pass the budget before the year-end, we're giving the public the cow end of the deal," he said.

The proposed budget is P1.04.4 billion higher than this year's P1.0.4 billion outlay.

Opposition Representatives Antonio Nieto and Robin Padilla had revealed the campaign to unseat De Venecia, saying that about 60 lawmakers had expressed their support for the bid of Pichay, a stalwart of the ruling Lakas-CMD, for the speakership.

But De Venecia said some allies had forfeited the easier move, saying, "Everybody is free to run. [and in a democracy such as ours. It's not a rebellion to the ranks let just post-impeachment jockeying of posts," De Venecia said.

Pichay himself was playing it coy—coy has reported move to oust De Venecia.

"What counter move?" asked Pichay when reached by phone.

The usually talkative Pichay said he was just "relaxing somewhere on a beach in the south, drinking buko juice, not minding the hitting attacks by the Speaker whom I hold no high esteem."

Asked about his rumored ambition to snatch the speakership from De Venecia, he said: "When the time comes for me to make a decision, I will definitely talk to him man to man and tell him about the sentiments of the majority."

He assured De Venecia he would not "halt the Speaker in his track."

"I want to keep my cards to my chest. The majority will be lost if I say something now. We will remain unsuspects to the moment me," said Pichay who said he was still "doing coordinating" with other members of the ruling coalition.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles, a close friend of Pichay's, has been trying to mediate with De Venecia.

"Efforts in the House to finish strong are none for Christmas. It's a nightmare to think about results in the majority bloc," said Nograles, who called for a caucus of some 160 lawmakers belonging to the majority bloc.

Nograles said both De Venecia and Pichay must talk things through so the allies in the majority would remain intact. "We need to fix this before we resume sessions on Nov. 7," he said.

Recto, of the senior bid against De Venecia, came on the heels of the cancellation of the House budget hearings due to lack of a quorum, raising the possibility that the 2006 budget would be streamed.

Sen. Manuel Villar, chair of the committee on finance, had ordered the hope the House would transmit its version of the budget by mid-November so the Senate could start deliberations.

Recto also warned that a delay in the passage of the budget would affect the release of four major items in the outlay such as the increase in the pay and retirement benefits of government employees and expenditures for infrastructure projects, education and health.

No reason to doubt gov't figures, says Neri

By Christine O. Avendaño

THERE IS NO REASON FOR ANYONE to doubt the government statistics that show the economy grew by five percent in the third quarter despite the political turmoil.

Budget Secretary Romulo Neri said yesterday the government data was "very very accurate," in reaction to some opposition lawmakers' claim that the figures did not show the true picture in the country.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero told DZRH radio that he doubted the latest GDP (gross domestic product) growth figure because the people were not feeling the economic gains but remained poor.

Defending the data, Neri said the people who collate government data were professionals and well-respected. "So, he did not think their work should be doubted.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the country was on the verge of an economic takeoff and this was supported by various financial institutions.

"This government is resolved to make the Philippine market economy a vanguard in the global arena," Bunye said in a statement.

Also interviewed over DZRH radio, Neri explained how the economy was able to grow despite the political storm buffeting the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo and the occurrence of natural disasters like the El Niño weather phenomenon that causes drought.

He said the agricultural sector, which was down in the first two quarters because of El Niño, was now recovering.

Other sectors of the economy, like tourism and banking, were also doing well, he said.

Many investments were coming into the existing industries and this was providing jobs in the countryside, he said.

Neri said increasing exports numbers were also helping the economy, it being "labor intensive."

But he said this continued hike in oil prices, which was "beyond the control of the government," was making the lives of the people difficult.

"We have to balance everything."

Solons urge GMA: Make exec appear

By TJ Burgonio

THE SENATE WILL ASK PRESIDENT MACApagal-Arroyo to compel former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-Joc" Bolante to appear at its inquiry into the alleged misuse of P728 million in fertilizer funds in last year's presidential election.

"If he keeps on snubbing the hearing, we will ask the President, since she's the one who appointed him as Undersecretary, to compel him to appear," said Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., chair of the committee on agriculture and food.

Bolante snubbed the Senate's first hearing on Oct. 6.

Late Friday, the senate's staff and a member of the Office of the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms tried to serve him a subpoena at the Veteran Philippine Plaza where he was presiding over a Watercom-related conference.

Bolante's lawyer Antonio Zabarte received the subpoena instead.

Zabarte maintained that Bolante had already explained his role in the disbursement of the funds and that current agriculture officials were in a better position to explain.

But Magsaysay insisted that Bolante, who had been designated by then Agriculture Secretary Luis "Cito" Lorenzo to handle the disbursement of the funds in 2004, was the best person to shed light on the matter.

"He's the key. He was asked by Cito to handle the fund from beginning to end," Magsaysay said.

The Senate wants to know where the funds, supposedly intended to buy farm implements and inputs, were after farmers complained they did not receive any money, the senator said.

Measures set up against bird flu

CAVITE, PHILIPPINES (REUTERS) All in place to prevent the $1,000 fortune Gamecocks breeding from becoming the epicenter of a bird flu outbreak in the Philippines, Mayor Jerry Delayo said.

The national government had helped form a 24-hour surveillance team composed of personnel from the Department of Health and the Bureau of Animal Industry, Delayo said.

The team is equipped with a mobile laboratory to do blood tests of migratory or domestic fowl that show symptoms of the avian influenza virus.

The Philippines has remained free of the H5N1 strain of the virus that has killed more than 60 people and millions of chickens in Southeast Asia since 2003, the national task force said.

Delayo said a local task force was organized from among local agriculture and health officials, barangay leaders, parish pastoral councils members and duck raisers.

As of Friday, he said business never being ill, trained for the reporting system of the task force.

Duck raisers have also begun relocating their ducks away from the town's 250-hectare bird sanctuary. The move involves have kept their ducks in coops, temporarily abandoning the tradition of raising ducks in the open where matured duck like rice, corn grits and snails are available.

Three storms, and Delayo, would reduce the risk of mingling between domestic and migratory fowl which fly to the marshland for winter and breed until February.

In Cagayan Valley, local governments have ordered a tight watch over the region's two birds where migratory birds nest. Rosel'e Orejas, PIA Central Luzon Desk; Filomeno Vistan Jr., PIA Northern Luzon Bureau, AFP

UN Day special to RP envoy

THIS YEAR'S CELEBRATION OF United Nations Day today, Oct. 24, is specially significant in the 60th year of the organization for one more—Philippine Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Lauro L. Baja.

Baja heads the country's participation or key meetings of the UN, particularly the Security Council, the organization's most powerful body.

"That constitutes(s) the country General gives an diplomatic prominence. The President's [then-]appointment very successful climbing of the council, as the first woman leader to do so, highlights our membership," Baja said.

A career diplomat with over 40 years in the service, Baja has established himself as a consensus builder since his days as senior undersecretary for policy at the Department of Foreign Affairs, where he successfully negotiated, among other posts, the Declaration of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia.

AMBASSADOR Baja

He also received the highest awards from Brazil and Italy, his two previous postings as ambassador.

In the Security Council, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and various delegations cited Baja for "bringing unity back to the Security Council and multilateralism to the core of the United Nations" during the first presidency of the council in June 2004.

As shepherded the landmark Security Council Resolution 1546 which transferred sovereignty to the interim government of Iraq and provided the framework for the international process to that country. He holds two chairmanships and three vice chairmanships of Security Council committees.

"In negotiations, it is necessary to give a little to get a little. Oftentimes the hands you torture with your pens are as important as the knowledge, and the experience, and the talent you must have to discharge your mandate," Baja said.

"I am glad we were able to establish an identity and play a role in the Security Council. The goodwill and respect we earn in the council could be useful pursuits to gain acceptance of other Philippine initiatives in the United Nations," he added.

These initiatives include the promotion of an interfaith dialogue for peace, a debt for equity swap in Millennium Development Goal projects, and migration and sustainable development programs.

The Philippines expects to be the President of the 61st United Nations General Assembly as well as win election to ECOSOC next year.

Pinoy sailor saves 3, gets DFA award

FOR RISKING HIS LIFE TO SAVE THREE Colombian fishermen from drowning in enemy seas, a veteran Filipino seaman has been cognized from the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo awarded Noel Sorena a Certificate of Recognition on Friday, three thing him as a "hero in the truest sense" who displayed "tremendous courage, valor and selflessness at sea."

Sorena, a catcher of Camarines Sur, has been working as a seafarer for 15 years.

According to the DFA, the incident happened last March in Cartagena , Colombia.

In the middle of a storm, rough waves overturned the Colombian fishermen's boat, forcing them to cling to the boat's keel with only their head not water for more than one day.

Their boat was sighted by Sorena's vessel, the M/T Inca, but extreme weather conditions hampered any rescue.

Despite the risk, Sorena jumped into the watery and swam to the fishermen.

"This is the spirit that animates Filipinos everywhere," Romulo said. "A spirit that enables Filipinos not only to face life's adversities but to triumph over adversities."

The simple ceremonies were held at the secretary's office at the DFA.

Present were Sorena's brother, Romeo, and William Medcoff, director of Wallem Maritime Shipping Co., representing Sorena's manning agency.

Medcoff also presented Sorena a plaque of recognition from the Italian Group of Companies, the seaman's Greek employer. Nikko Odsey

Women's group marks UN Day

THE ALL NATIONS WOMEN'S GROUP (ANWG) celebrates United Nations Day today with a cultural program at the residence of Thai ambassador Adisi Dhitikraisorada at 14 Jacaranda St., North Forbes Park, Makati City at 2 p.m. The theme of the affair is "Collaboration between Cultures: The Tie that Binds All Nations."

The affair will feature a welcome dance presentation by the Royal Thai Embassy ladies, highlighted by the keynote speech of Ambassador Dhitikraisorada. She will be introduced by ANWG president Merceditas Panelsa.

The program will also feature a violin solo by Dorsie Justine Huang of the Philharmonic Orchestra, accompanied by Jose Rosca on the piano. Soloist Nida Sebastian will render several songs and the Cincowil Dance Studio will perform a ballet.

Highlight of the affair will be the parade of international costumes worn by ANWG members and guests. Overall chair of the cultural program is Villa Granada de Gaza and co-chair is Celia Meyer.

Honorary consul in Poland named

DARIUSZ MARIA A. POLSO-AMERICAN, has been appointed honorary consul of the Philippines in Wroclaw, Poland, by Foreign Secretary Alberto G. Romulo.

Wijat has jurisdiction over Lower Silesia, Wielkopolska and Podkarpackie and is under the supervision of the Philippine Embassy in Budapest headed by Ambassador Alejandro del Rosario.

He holds an MBA from the Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania, graduating with honors.

He is a member of the American Chamber of Commerce in Warsaw and was cited as New Economy Man of the Year by Businessman's Magazine.

Wijat is married to a Filipina, Miss Frances Reyes, and they have two children.

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Loren: Noli 'great tragedy' in parliamentary system

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER SEN. LORENZO LEGARDA says Vice President Noli de Castro will be a "great tragedy" in a proposed parliamentary system and could even wreck it before it could be planted firmly in the ground.

The Office of the Vice President, along with the Senate, will be abolished if the Consultative Commission on Constitutional Amendments has its way.

But no appeal for Cayetano, the commission proposes to make him Speaker of the Bicameral during an interim period, or until his current term expires in 2010. Senators will also remain as members of parliament.

"If this happens, it would be a great tragedy because Noli has not shown any ability for parliamentary work during his short stint as a senator. He might just wreck the parliamentary process," Legarda said.

She was reacting yesterday to the Consultative Commission's recommendation to shift the country to a federal-type parliamentary system of government.

Legarda, who lost in De Castro in the 2004 vice presidential election, said the Vice President should not worry too much about his role in the proposed new Constitution because his election was still being questioned.

Her election protest against De Castro is still being heard by the Supreme Court, sitting as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal.

In her complaint, Legarda claimed that the 2004 election was marred by massive fraud, resulting in the proclamation of De Castro as Vice President-elect.

"The fate of our people and future generations is involved in the contemplated amendments or changes to the Constitution, thus it seems that Ate De Cayetano is concerned only with what happens to him and his hold on governmental powers," Legarda said. "If he really wants to serve the people, he should resign."

Rubber-stamp image bugs consultative body

From page A1

government. But could the 49-member Consultative Commission at least make an effort to take a more independent, transparent stance?

Some of the commission's members, the congressional critics of the initiative, say although at the process the body has adopted is carrying out its mandate, describing it as "flawed."

For example, they question a decision to vote first on proposed amendments before going out to consult the public.

"Are we here to consult or to convince the people about a predetermined position?" asked Lanao Kkary Lim, national president of the League of Barangays.

"We are no more than a rubber-stamp commission," he said, warning that their efforts could turn into a "very expensive an exercise."

Other members are concerned that the commission, formed by the President, could be seen as a mere rubber stamp and an "approve-now-consult-later" body.

With a budget of P16 million, the commission was convened on Sept. 20 and has been meeting four times a week since. It has up to Dec. 15 to complete its work and prepare a report to the President, who could then submit it to Congress.

First consultation

Starting today, the commission is sending teams to Cebu, Tacloban-ogs and Palawan to "conduct consultations and studies" and propose amendments and revisions to the 1987 Constitution.

But before even conducting its first consultation, the plenary approved on Thursday, by a vote of 32-7, a report of the committee stating how the presidential system will: a bicameral congress and a parliamentary government with no far-reaching body.

There are no details on what this system is all about. Some members are even dismayed at the "unsubstantiated presentation" by the committee chair, Raymundo Ingeles.

In its plenary session on Thursday, the commission voted on a proposal on a recommendation to set up a federal system where powers and resources would be decentralized to regional governments or states.

The item was sent back to the committee on the structures of the republic due to "technical reasons," said commission secretary general Lilia Leonardo-Leviste.

But during the debates, the old issue of why the body was making a decision before it was able to get the public sentiment stepped up again.

Commission chair Jose Abueva and other officials had dismissed these objections in past meetings.

Subject to refinements

Abueva, the prime advocate of the parliamentary-federal system, said he and others like-minded were "not hypocrites" and gave assurances they would take the people's sentiments into account.

"This is our best judgment but it will be subject to refinements and modifications," he said.

Journalist Jarius Bondoc said the commission would appear to be out to advocate rather than to find out if the people supported specific Charter changes.

"This is a very flawed procedure [when we decide] even before we can consult the people. The better process would be consult the people first then come up with a decision," said Jose Villanueva.

He said that in his consultations with barangays in Manila, it became clear that people "frown nothing" about federalism.

He said it would be "easier to sell a modified presidential system."

The vote on the shift to a parliamentary-reformed system has been delayed by one week over the same opposition.

Why the rush in recommend the parliamentary shift? If the public is against this recommendation, Villanueva asked, "Can we be honest or intransigent in insisting on our decision?"

Another member, Andres Bautista, is afraid that the Concom would be seen as an "approve-now-consult-later" body. He proposed that in the phrasing of its conclusion to shift, the vote should be described as "preliminary."

Commissioner Sergio Lara Davis proposed, then, that the conclusion should also be "subject to final deliberations."

But ex-Cebu Gov. Pablo Garcia said using the buzzwords was "self-defeating" and would water down the plenary decision. "That would effectively kill the resolution," he said.

He likened the situation to someone who had decided to get married but wanted to consult relatives if the wedding should be held "on a full moon, new moon or what," drawing laughter from his colleagues.

Specific task

Mayor Grace Padaca of Naval, Biliran, asked, "Can't we go against federalism? It seems we have prejudged the direction of this body." The former congressman opposes the transition of the presidential system with dual executives.

Journalist Carmen Pedrosa called Espina's attention to the commission's limited terms in the commission, pointing out that it was tasked with studying and proposing amendments, principally the shift to the parliamentary-federal arrangement.

If its leadership is any gauge, the commission appears dead-set on recommending a shift to the parliamentary-federal system.

Three of its key members—Abueva, Lovenana and Bay Magna Teves—belong to the Citizens' Movement for a Federal Philippines. This group has prepared a "Draft Constitution for a Federal Republic of the Philippines with a Parliamentary Government."

The draft provides mainly for a federal government with 11 constituent states and their local governments.

Commission officials could not explain exactly how the result of the public consultations would be measured and considered by the commission in its final report.

Birds star in show amid . . .

From page A1

nine features of the Malagos Garden Resort in Davao City since 2002. For its second season, organizers coordinated with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to bring the show to the NinoFil in Quezon City.

Hosted by wildlife conservationist and entertainer Robert Parmentgna, the show features more than 200 birds from some 30 species that entertain guests with tricks in the middle of a running quiz about civic values, such as sportsmanship, perseverance, peacemaking honesty and proper waste disposal.

The host also talks about the depletion of forests that makes many bird species lose their homes, and how biodiversity keeps the ecosystem stable.

Natural behavior

At the launch of the bird show on Saturday, Parmentgna said it was important to make the birds exude their natural behavior.

With Blue and Red as "actors," he described the courtship rituals of macaws, in which the male suitor keeps offering his prospective mate sticks for her nest.

At first, Blue keeps retrieving what looked like hard sticks, until Red got his act together and began offering twigs with leaves, which she happily accepted.

After a few more offerings, Blue finally offered Red inside her nest. "And they lived happily ever after," Parmentgna said.

The host also told the audience about the story of Kuda, a green parrot who was named after the Filipino word "mandaraman" to limit their love-more talks.

Since taking Kuda into their care, he has grown back his feathers and has stopped his bad habit, he said.

Flying exercises

Parmentgna said the birds had been trained to depend on human handlers and would not survive if they were set free. Some are also physically disabled, including a blind black palm cockatoo, he said. The birds were being hooked after well, given flying exercises and fed a natural regimen of fruits, nuts and fish.

The show is interactive, meaning the audience is seated in an open area where the performing birds soar above them. But the audience is told not to feed the birds or distract them.

The show will run until Jan. 29, 2006. Performances are held Thursdays to Sundays at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Tickets cost P300 for adults, P180 for students and P300 for senior citizens.

Correction

IN THE OCT. 17 issue, a front-page story—"Feminists turn to Rizal for guidance"—erroneously stated that Jose Rizal's annotation on Dec. 30, 1896 "opposed Filipino revolutionaries, like Andres Bonifacio, to take up arms against Spain two years later." The Philippine Revolution broke out in August 1896, or four months before Rizal's execution—not in 1898 as the story said.

ATTENTION LAWYERS!

Pursuant to Bar Matter 850, non-compliance with the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) requirement shall be a cause for placing a lawyer as a delinquent member of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) and consequently, he shall not be permitted to practice law. Notices of non-compliance for the first compliance period of the MCLE are now being sent out by the MCLE Committee. The deadline for the second compliance period of the MCLE is fast approaching.

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☐ Nov. 19 a.m.	2/Trial and Pre-Trial Skills	Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval
	2/MCLE Prescribed: Securities Regulation Code and Corporate Governance	SEC Dir. Justina F. Calanoga
☐ Nov. 19 p.m.	2/Legal Writing and Oral Advocacy	Justice Magsaysay M. De Leon
	Impasses in Constitutional Law: The Impeachment Process	Prof. Harry H.L. Roque, Jr.
☐ Nov. 26 a.m.	2/MCLE Prescribed: Technology and the Law	Atty. Ivan John E. Uy
	2/Legal Ethics	Justice Hector L. Hofilena
☐ Nov. 26 p.m.	2/MCLE Prescribed: Recent Reforms in Tax Laws	Atty. Nestor M. Aguja
	2/Alternative Dispute Resolution	Dean Custodio O. Parlade
☐ Dec. 03 a.m.	2/Legal Writing and Oral Advocacy	Justice Ruben T. Reyes
	2/Trial and Pre-Trial Skills	Justice Lucas P. Bersamin
☐ Dec. 03 p.m.	2/Updates in New Rules and Jurisprudence in Family Law	Atty. Melencio S. Sta. Maria
	2/Legal Ethics	Justice Martin L. Aquino
	1/Updates in Substantive and Procedural Laws and Jurisprudence: New Notarial Law	Justice Martin L. Aquino
☐ Dec. 10 a.m.	2/International Law	Prof. Harry H.L. Roque, Jr.
	2/Legal Ethics	Justice Jose L. Salas
☐ Dec. 10 p.m.	2/Alternative Dispute Resolution	Dean Pedro B. Bacungan
	2/Updates in Criminal Law	Justice Oscarlaso M. Peralta

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, October 24, 2005
30th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Rom 8:18-27
Gospel: Luke 13:10-17

LUKE: Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on one of the Sabbath and a crippled woman was there. As well spirit had kept her bent for 18 years so that she could not straighten up at all. Seeing her, Jesus called her to him and said, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." Then he laid his hands upon her and immediately she was made straight and praised God.

But the ruler of the synagogue was indignant because Jesus had healed her on the Sabbath, and he said to the people, "There are six days in which work should be done. Come on those days to be healed and not on the Sabbath."

But the Lord replied, "You hypocrites! Each of you unties his ox or his donkey on the Sabbath and leads it out to the stall to give it water. And here you have a daughter of Abraham whom Satan had bound for 18 years. Should she not be freed from her bonds on the Sabbath?"

When Jesus said this, all his opponents felt ashamed. But the people rejoiced at the many wonders they beheld through him.

Commentary:

Jesus is in a synagogue on a Sabbath, teaching and sees a woman bent double for 17 years! She would have been in the back of the gathering! She is the real freedom for her and leaves [the] synagogue, saying through the act of synagogue would have gained like the thief [or] at the scene or wouldn't have reached him. He kept hands on her and spoke her up! And she stands and praises God loudly. And [before] means. The synagogue ruler tries to put order back, by quoting the law, and telling people not to bring people to be healed! [Jesus] brought her or had anything to do with her for ancestors years! ... and Jesus becomes prophet as well as preacher. He declares them all hypocrites, intent on outwardly worshipping and obeying laws, but loosing them for their own convenience when it suits their livelihood [eating their animals to water]! but not caring at all about human beings, here under torment, would not [Jesus] heal [Satan means anything or anyone who hinders one from living as a child of God]. She is the only daughter of Abraham, true believer and worshipper about them! Do we ever really worship God?

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Church protests 'aswang' festival

By Christian V. Esguerra

A FESTIVAL THAT SUPPOSEDLY GLORIFIES evil and paganism in Capiz, the country's perceived city of *aswang* (witches), has angered the local Roman Catholic Church.

The Archbishop of Capiz has issued a strongly worded pastoral letter condemning the second "Lupad Capiznon Festival" set on Oct. 28-30 for purportedly smearing the dignity of the province's folk.

"We do not allow even seemingly the glorification of the *aswang* image per se and much more at the expense of the Capiceños who are worthy of their dignity and person," said Archbishop Onesimo Gordoncillo.

The letter, a copy of which was e-mailed to the INQUIRER, was read during Mass in parishes under the archdiocese beginning Sunday.

For the Capiz clergy, the event is every inch an exaltation of the pagan belief in *aswang*, a creature in Philippine folklore that preys on pregnant women.

Belief has it that they thrive in Capiz, a province in the Panay islands, which has one of the most active and devout Catholic flocks in the country.

Pressure from the Church forced the organizers, the Dugo Capiznon Inc. (DCI), to change the event's original name "Aswang Pag-usoy Festival," roughly translated as "In Search of the Aswang," to something less telling.

The DCI also acceded to Gordoncillo's request for there to be no *aswang* costumes or body painting during the festival.

Nevertheless, various religious organizations had asked Roxas City Mayor Antonio del Rosario to stop the holding of the festival because they said "it greatly insulted God."

Del Rosario declined the request saying it was not a violation of the law and the DCI was a legitimate organization registered with the proper government agencies.

Arnel Estiaga, DCI director, said that despite strong opposition from the Catholic Church and other religious groups, they were all set for the three-day festival.

He stressed that the DCI would stand by its goal of turning the negative notion of *aswang* into something positive—like promoting tourism which could boost the economic and cultural vitality of Capiz. *With Felipe V. Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau*

PNB rebuffed on Marcos funds

HUMAN RIGHTS VICTIMS OF MARTIAL LAW won a significant victory over the weekend after a Singaporean court rejected an appeal by the Philippine National Bank to stop the court from hearing a lawsuit involving the $25-million in Marcos funds still deposited in the Singaporean branch of German bank West LB.

Robert Swift, American lawyer of the human rights victims, and his Filipino co-counsel Rod Domingo Jr. said Singaporean Justice Kan Ting Chiu on Friday denied the motion of PNB to transfer the case to the Philippines. The PNB had argued that only a Philippine court could hear the case.

The Singaporean branch of West LB had refused to remit the $25-million Marcos Swiss deposits to the Philippine government despite an order from Swiss authorities in July 2003.

The amount (previously $22 million) forms part of the $683 million in Marcos Swiss deposits that were ordered transferred to the Philippine government by Swiss authorities after the Philippine Supreme Court declared the funds were "ill-gotten." *Alcuin Papa*

NOTICE AND WARNING

Notice is hereby given to the public that our client, **STRATEGY MARKETING CORPORATION** of Caloocan City, is the owner of the trademark "**ULTRALITE** and **Representation of a Bear's Paw**" for use on shoes, slippers and boots covered by Application Serial No. 4-2005-006956 and an industrial design for a **SANDAL** covered by Application Serial No. 3-2005-000780 both pending with the Intellectual Property Office. As owner, our client is entitled to the exclusive use of the proceeding mark and industrial design in the Philippines.

STRATEGY MARKETING CORPORATION has not authorized any individual or entity to use its trademark "**ULTRALITE** and **Representation of a Bear's Paw**" or the manufacture, importation, distribution, and / or sale of sandals with identical or substantially similar design to its above sandal design.

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[illegible]
[illegible]

NEGLECTED Parko waters deer and chicken-shaped bushes at his commercial garden in Silangan in Ilocos Norte, which was put up with funds provided by his nephew who works as a nurse in Hawaii. AFP

OFW cash reshapes Ilocos countryside

[illegible]

them all around the lake," says Isolde Ilustrisimo, whose uncle built his P7-million dream home five years ago on a one-hectare lot of rice paddy and woods.

His uncle plans to retire here soon after decades serving as a steward on many ships based in the US port of San Diego.

"He was just once, just like us. His family lived in a one-room bamboo shack with a wood-burning stove," Ilustrisimo tells Agence France-Presse. "Without the [US Navy], they would have stayed that way."

Tantoco cousins and neighbors have also sought their fortunes abroad, from caregivers in Canada to domestic helpers in Hong Kong and Spain. They are part of the army of four million Filipinos who now work abroad sending back an estimated $6 billion back home every year.

Property boom

Tax cuts on land south of the lake have since fuelled over the past year hundreds of the huge dreamt.

"We bought this place for P1,500 a square meter, and we considered ourselves lucky. Now land around here goes for P1,500-P2,000 per square meter," says Hazel Pedro, who runs a garden and landscaping business that caters to the newly wealthy neighbors.

A nephew who works in a Hawaii hotel put up the capital.

Josephine Eder's eldest sister, based in southern California, had one side of a hillside carved out so she could build a sprawling bungalow close to the northeastern shore of the lake.

Twenty-six major Philippine banks have followed the gang suite by opening branches in Laoag City, the capital of Ilocos Norte, according to Gov. Rodolfo Fariñas Jr.

"I would venture to say that if you want to buy dollars, they would be cheapest here because of the volume of remittances," Marcos tells AFP.

"Some families have not one but two mansions abroad," he says. "The result is beautiful houses, plus they also start businesses, which is great."

Trapped in a dry, narrow coastal plain on the northwestern tip of Luzon, the people of the Ilocos region caught the travel bug early on and blazed a trail that [illegible] million have followed.

The first workers sailed off to work in the sugarcane plantations of Hawaii in 1906 from Ilocos region, a fortune per [illegible] Yet last month of Manila, says Ilocos[illegible] Dominic, a special assistant to the Ilocos Norte governor.

"That is how we see them in Ilocos, and now we are a strong political force in Hawaii," Dominic says.

Hawaii governor

He says Hawaii Gov. Linda Lingle, many of whose constituents are the descendants of the Ilocano plantation workers, plans to visit the Ilocos region on Jan. 7 next year to attend a ceremonial marker at Salcedo[illegible]

Ramos says his grandfather, Hermenio Calingar, was among the first Ilocos residents to work the Hawaii sugarcane fields. His younger brothers, Alberto and Victorio, soon followed him, and another brother, Pelagio, also went after World War II.

The eldest and the youngest [illegible] and never returned, but the fun-loving Alberto had kidney surgery and returned to a life of poverty here.

"Grandpa Alberto was the first Caraboo-driven cars landed their luggage in the port. They said this road was a mere dirt path at the time," Ramos says, pointing to the concrete highway outside.

Aside from modernizing property prices, the new wealth has boosted agricultural output in these parts, according to Ramos.

"Now that local folk are going abroad, capital is more readily available. Before we used tractors and other farm implements made in the south but handmade tools," he adds. AFP

Statement of President Joseph Ejercito Estrada

A CALL FOR PERSONAL SACRIFICE.

For everything, there is a time under the sun, as Ecclesiastes teaches us.

And the time has come to heed the appeal made by two of our respected religious leaders of the Iglesia ni Cristo, Executive Minister Brother Eraño Manalo, and of the El Shaddai Movement, Brother Mike Velarde.

They urge today's national leaders to "sacrifice a portion of what they believe are theirs to hold on to, for the sake of our suffering people."

They ask so little by way of an offering of personal sacrifice from today's national leaders, yet more should have been asked of them – they who hold power and position, vested as they are with the responsibility and obligation to help the poor and the needy, and alleviating their sufferings.

Sacrificing even all, not merely a portion of what national leaders believe to be theirs to have and to hold, and done for the Filipino masses, is what the greatness of leadership is all about.

For power is fleeting, but greatness of the leadership in serving the people right, is not.

In 2001, I, the duly elected President and constitutional Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, made the supreme sacrifice of leaving Malacañan Palace while on official leave, to prevent blood from being spilled in the streets, and with hope high in me that my sacrifice would not have been in vain and that, perhaps, the people would have been served better under an acting government.

That sacrifice which I had offered freely, however, may have been put to waste, with the economy having deteriorated, causing more of our masses to suffer too much and with the nation remaining deeply divided under a new leadership, creating an atmosphere of constant political bickering being experienced today.

The political opposition can hardly offer to even sacrifice a portion of that which they hold on to, because the opposition holds neither power nor position.

It is today's leaders who hold power and position who must heed the call of the times and alleviate the sufferings of the Filipino people. This is their responsibility and their duty.

Let us therefore more than heed the call of Brother Manalo and Brother Mike for today's national leaders to offer that supreme sacrifice of giving up all that they believe is theirs to hold on to.

If I had more to offer by way of power and position, I would not hesitate to sacrifice all I can, and always for the Filipino masses, who I care deeply for, now and for all time.

Joseph Ejercito Estrada

SPORTS

Edro Teddyski S. Melendres

No stopping Daniels as Air21 wins

By Jose Navarro

A LITTLE BIT OVERWEIGHT, SHAWN DANIELS put his excess poundage to good use last night.

Daniels relentlessly used his 6-foot-5, 260-lb frame to ram through the thin Lucio Beatty frontline and powered Air21 to a 110-98 victory over hobbled visitors in the San Mig Coffee PBA Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

Not even Dennis Espino, last season's Defensive Player of the Year, could handle Daniels as the Express recovered from a double-digit deficit in the third quarter to earn their second win in five games.

"So many people would not appreciate his [Daniels'] value, but honestly, he's the one needed by the team to fill that hole in the middle," said Air21 head coach Bo Perasol.

In the second game, Red Hill hammered out a tough 76-74 decision over last San Miguel, stretching the Brewmen's winless start to four straight games.

The Hotshots, on the other hand, notched a four-game roller-coaster.

Quinnon Greer led the Bombo with 22 points and 12 rebounds while Dennis Villanueva added 15 points and 12 boards.

Bong Hilario led the Brewmen with 19 points and 12 rebounds in what could be his last game in the league. Jun Magsaysay also fired up four points for replacements Jun Jun Sumbilla and Jhay Ramos. The Brewmen are expected to announce the replacement before Saturday's game against Air21 in Naga City.

Daniels, after take-turned with Marlon Aquino and Lyndi White in the closing late, finished with 20 points, 14 rebounds when the Express rallied from a 13-point deficit to take an 81-81 edge entering the 4th and period. Florabel had 13 assists.

Rookie Mike Cortaleta pumped in his career-high 18 points with a tomahawk dunk over the 6-9 Aquino that highlighted a fourth-quarter scoring spree by the Express.

Air21 rushed behind a full-court press during the opening minutes of the fourth quarter with Cortaleta, Ronnie Tolsá and Derrick Pone smothering Sta. Lucia's backcourt.

Perasol particularly shed Cortaleta's work on Chester Tolentino, who

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Tired of SUBSTANDARD and INFERIOR truck bodies in the market?
CENTRO

Bro. Mike, Hyatt 10 push snap election

Pimentel did not make a "graceful exit" by cutting short his term. He also wants the holding of elections next year only after Charter change and a shift to a parliamentary form of government.

But Arroyo's government officials and members of the House of Representatives adopted a manifesto on Thursday calling for Ms Arroyo to finish her term.

Villar and Velarde met with big businessmen in Makati City about "it's days ago" and talked about to make Congress to pass the amendments to the Constitution that would allow the snap polls, Osmeña said on Saturday night.

Ballot amendment

"Since snap elections are not provided for in the Constitution, they thought that Congress acting as a constituent assembly would pass a ballot amendment so that it could be submitted to the people in a plebiscite calling immediately for snap elections," he said.

Osmeña said he was informed that Villar and Velarde had requested the meeting. "They were touting the idea with the business community to see if they could get support and they could all go to Davos and ask me to agree to this," the senator said.

Osmeña said the meeting at the Grand Ballroom in Makati was attended by nine businessmen from the Makati Business Club, Financial Executives of the Philippines, Management Association of the Philippines and the Federation of Philippine Industries.

Delicate

Villar confirmed last night having attended a meeting in Manila, but he said he had no authority to divulge anything about it. "The matter is a little delicate to divulge," he said.

"Whenever I talk there, they take the opportunity to come and see me," he said, adding that people talk to him because they know "I am not involved in politics."

He said he was just a participant and that he didn't initiate anything.

Asked if he went to the Orchard Hotel, he replied, laughing: "What I know is that I made an appearance."

Also last night, Velarde confirmed that he and Villar had met recently with leaders of the Makati Business Club and other business organizations and discussed a "joint effort with all sectors" to resolve the lingering crisis in the Arroyo presidency.

"The objective (of the meeting) is to unite everybody and establish a formula for principled cooperation," the influential leader of the Catholic charismatic group said in a message to the Inquirer.

Constituent assembly

"This will be achieved by having a multi-partisan Cabinet immediately and work for the lifting of the term limit (of elective officials and) to pave the way for the holding of a presidential election in 2007," Velarde said.

Velarde said Congress should convene as a constituent assembly to propose a "simple amendment" to the Charter, which will lift term limits and provide for the 2007 election. The amendment will be submitted to a plebiscite for approval.

Velarde said the amendment would be part of a four-step formula aimed at ensuring the cooperation of all sectors.

First is the setting up by Ms Arroyo of a multipartisan Cabinet. Velarde earlier said the issuance that he had proposed a 60-40 sharing of Cabinet posts, with more seats going to the opposition.)

Comelec cleanup

Next is the approval of the amendment by Congress and the people to be followed by the "cleanup" of the Commission on Elections." Others, Velarde said, the results of the plebiscite and elections would be questionable.

After the presidential election, Congress could tackle the proposal to shift to a parliamentary-federal system of government, he said.

Among the business leaders Velarde and Villar reportedly met with were Ricardo Nomada, Cesar Buenaventura and Guillermo Luz of the MBC, which has called for Ms Arroyo's resignation, as well as the chair of SGV.

Velarde felt the businessmen were "receptive" to the proposal, and one of them described it as a "refreshing formula."

Until Nov. 30

The Black and White Movement (BWM) has given Dr Canlas until Nov. 30 to withdraw support from Ms Arroyo and to accept the proposal to take over the government as her constitutional successor.

If he agrees, a "welcome prayer rally" would be held on that day, BWM convenor Ricardo "Boying" Romulo III said. "Our message to him would be, 'Game ka na sa Ate (Are you ready, Kuya ka?'"

He said a "breakaway" by Dr Canlas could hasten the downfall of Ms Arroyo, in the same manner that her breakaway from Joseph Estrada in 2000 weakened the Estrada presidency.

But if Dr Canlas declined, BWM said it would support Senate President Franklin Drilon as "acting president," who should call for a special election "within 45 days as provided for in the Constitution."

"We will also declare Dr Canlas an accomplice of GMA (Ms Arroyo) and that would give us the moral basis to push him," Romulo said.

In throwing their support behind Dr Canlas, the BWM, which includes assigned Cabinet secretaries Ermenio "Diday" Soliman, Florencio "Butch" Abad, Rosario "Dingdong" Dobo and Raul de "Mike" Bardelas among its members, also "affirmed" its decision that Ms Arroyo should be replaced for cheating in the May 2004 elections.

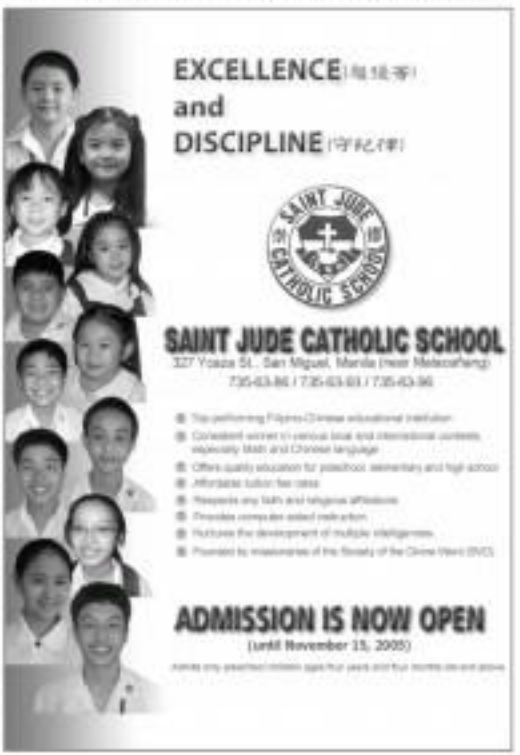
"After extensive deliberations, we have decided that our preferred option for regime change is for the Vice President to succeed as Executive president until 2007, for him to install an advisory council and to agree to a popularly affirmed reform agenda," the group said in a resolution read at the closing of a daylong workshop on "succession options" at the Ateneo High School campus near us homeless.

Abad said a delegation would meet with Dr Canlas to explain the position and proposal made by the group. "This will need his concurrence," Abad said.

The resolution was signed by Abad, Soliman, Dobo and Nicolas of the Oct. 31, and BWM convenors Romulo, Jerry Salonga, Sue Lagman and Chito Gascon. They were joined by some 200 carpentry leaders and organizers from as far away as Davao.

Saying the Arroyo was experiencing a "hardness of heart," a senior Roman Catholic bishop yesterday advised the President to "heed the prompted to cut short her term and yield her post by 2007.

Bishop Teodoro Bacani said such a decision would once and for all solve a restless public and allow her to govern more effectively for her three-year term, rather than when she knows she is completing her service. (DJS, TMD with reports from Lynn Resendiz, Pia Lee-Brago, Jeannette Andrade, Philip Tubeza and Christine O. Avendaño and Christine F. Esguerra in Manila



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US troops here for exercises

ON BOARD THE USS ESSEX, SUBIC BAY Freeport—Some 4,500 American troops arrived here Saturday for the start of the annual amphibious landing exercises with their Filipino counterparts.

The bilateral training dubbed "Phiblex 06" will engage US sailors and Marines in a two-week ground, air and naval integration exercises with at least 500 members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Three amphibious ships—the USS Essex, USS Juneau and USS Fort McHenry—ferried the troops belonging to the Forward Deployed Amphibious Ready Group and the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit based in Okinawa, Japan.

"This exercise will maintain the readiness [and] capability of both the Philippine and US armed forces and goes a long way to supporting peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region," said Capt. Mark Donahue of US Amphibious Squadron 11.

Donahue said the exercises would be held in Nueva Ecija, Cavite, Pampanga and Zambales.

Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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Recruited to Australia? Read this

THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DFA) warned the public, especially Filipino nurses, against being illegally recruited to Australia, where the practice has become rampant following reports of a skills shortage there.

In a recent statement, the DFA said the Philippine Embassy in Canberra had received numerous inquiries from nurses suspected of illegal recruitment and those with employment-related problems.

"It seems that the illegal recruiters are no longer afraid of us," Philippine Ambassador to Canberra Cristina Ortega admitted in the statement.

According to the embassy, illegal recruitment has been carried out through tourist visas, visas on arrival or visas for those who are coming non-existent jobs in Australia.

The DFA and the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration had issued an advisory saying it was not recruiting workers for Australia.

In the case of Philippine-trained nurses, Ortega said they were those with extensive experience in the Philippines and overseas might not immediately be hired in Australia because of the non-equivalency of qualifications between the two countries.

But for those who will be employed in Australia, Philippine-trained nurses are required to take bridging courses that take from six months to a year.

The Philippine embassy, Ortega said, had urged Australian authorities to allow bridging courses to be taken in the Philippines through countries' universities or colleges.

"This will put protection to Filipino nurses and ensure that they are gainfully employed once they are deployed in Australia," Ortega said.

Vilma Ensor

E. V. Abueg: 87

RETIRED SSS EMPLOYEE EVANGELAS H. (Ed) Abueg died yesterday of a lingering illness at the age of 87.

He is survived by his daughter Maria Abueg-Dungca, grandson Carlo Dungca, brother Dan Abueg, nephews and nieces, and in-laws.

His wife, Aurora Montes Abueg, passed away on Nov. 22, 2000.

His remains are at Chapel 8 of La Funeraria Paz on Araneta Ave., Quezon City. Interment is on Wednesday, Oct. 16, at the North Cemetery after a Mass at 8 a.m.

Empire King reigns

By Edwin Villanueva, Correspondent

EMPIRE KING SCORCHED SPEED ADvantage the heady stuff for's made of yesterday.

Displaying the heart and poise of a champion, Empire King surmounted all his nemesis down the stretch to win the 5th Santa Lucia Cup by a nose at the Santa Ana Park.

John Gochoco maneuvered the narrow victory, worth P200,000, of last year's Presidential Gold Cup colt.

Speed Advantage broke ahead of Empire King and played much use if you can, under Fernando Raquel Jr. Scaling the home turn, Gochoco pushed his mount to the lead but Speed Advantage soared back on even gain a one length margin at mid-stretch.

But Empire King, the progeny of Perfect Make-Carra Heaven, and Gochoco, the fourth jockey tapped to ride the millionaire chestnut colt, did not crumble. Under intense punishment, Empire King found a second wind and managed to nick his chocolate nose ahead of Speed Advantage, the Cojiangco Cup winner.

It was the 23rd victory in 39 runs so far for the family-bred-and Empire King. Winning time was 1 minute 40 seconds flat (24.3, 23.6, 23.2, 23.3).

Fine Noodles and Sound Offer finished third and fourth, respectively.

Earlier, Mosh came from behind to rule the Orchard Estates Sprint under Jesse Guce and Lani Hares topped the Shawcroft Estates race under Antonio Abanal Jr.

RP OPEN

Orcollo joins Bustamante in 9-ball final

ORCOLLO

DENNIS ORCOLLO flashed immaculate form in crushing Reymin Abrazaldo, 11-5, last night to forge a title duel with the favored Francisco "Django" Bustamante in the Philippine 9-ball Open at the Robinsons-Galleria Trade Hall.

The war ender from Siargao, who ousted Raniel Gallego, 9-7, in the quarterfinals, took the lead Bustamante through the race-to-11 semifinalists counter with Alamo and closed it out when he rattled the nine-ball open to the 10th rack.

Had Alamo won the rack, Orcollo still had a chance to wrap things up as he would be breaking in the next rack under the dreaded "hill-hill" format.

Bustamante had earlier topped the giant-killing run of Mark Tolentino to gain a shot at the championship of this P1.35 million event co-organized by Pepsi Sports and Solar Sports.

Tolentino earlier ousted Anthony "Self Base" de Luna, 9-4, in the quarterfinals.

A virtual unknown before the event, Tolentino rocked the tournament by upending last year's champion Antonio Gabica. He also took the measure of Elvis "Bala" Reyes, Rodolfo "Boy Sanson" Luat and Leonardo "Dadong" Andam.

The Bustamante-Orcollo title duel, a race-to-11 affair, was still going as at press time.

The winner gets P500,000 and the runner-up P200,000. Alonzo and Tolentino settled for P300,000 each as losing semifinalists.

Earlier, Orcollo was lucky to slip past Gallego, who came into their quarterfinal match fresh from cruising newly crowned US Open champion and former world pool titlist Alex Pagulayan.

With the score tied at 7-all, Gallego looked poised to wrap over the 25th frame after holding two difficult spin shots on the nine-ball. But in one fatal aesthetic miss by Gallego on a simple cut-shot at the blue-two turned the table in Orcollo, who gamely cleaned up the room to reach the fall.

Vilog tops last NAGT series leg at Alabang

GEORGE VILOG CELEBRATED HIS 20TH BIRTHday in advance by winning the seventh and last leg of the National Age Group Triathlon series this at the plush Ayala Alabang, even as youthful Gino Mangintong ended the overall women's title.

Finishing on his own respective, Vilog, who turns 20 today, dominated the three-events with an aggregate time of 1:15:08.

A three time 40 champion, Vilog swam the 750-meter course in 23:46 minutes, raced 38.54 in the 20k bike race and ran the 5k distance in 24:2.

Raul Garcia, head manager of RoserSac, chased Isaiaw by setting the 30-34 age bracket in 1:22:48, beating Rene Tablante and John Vince Bullos, who placed second and third, respectively in 1:28.13 and 1:24.15.

Mangintong, a 14-year-old second year high school student at Dominican College in Sto. Niño, Laguna, outpaced the 750m swim in 13:40 minutes, raced 38.54 in the 20k bike race and ran the 5k distance in 24:2.

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Shiela Barbayan clocked in second in 1:43.07, while Arabi Germalyn secured up third in 1:43.08.

Irene Cuenca was a lie second to Vilog in 1:26.00, while Isabelle Balagot came in fourth in 1:36.14.

Joefred Aragon topped the 30-39 class

Araneta Leisure Guide

CINEMA SCHEDULES

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CORPSE BRIDE 1:20 | 3:50 | 6:40 | 9:10 LEGEND OF ZORRO No Restriction 1:00 | 4:20 | 7:40 | 9:00	GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA DOOM 1:40 | 4:10 | 6:30 | 9:00
SHARKBOY & LAVA GIRL 2:00 | 4:20 | 6:40 | 9:00	LORD OF WAR 1:30 | 4:10 | 6:50 | 9:30
MASAHISTA 1:30 | 3:30 | 5:30 | 7:30 | 9:30	WALLACE & GROMIT 2:10 | 4:20 | 6:30 | 8:40
DEUCE BIGALOW 2 1:30 | 3:30 | 5:30 | 7:30 | 9:30	DUBAI 1:40 | 4:10 | 6:40 | 9:10
DOOM 2:20 | 4:40 | 7:10 | 9:30	THE 40 YR OLD VIRGIN 1:00 | 3:40 | 6:20 | 9:20

ALI MALL CINEMAS

1 DUBAI 12:30 | 3:00 | 5:30 | 8:00	4 LORD OF WAR 12:10 | 2:50 | 5:30 | 8:10
2 DOOM 12:00 | 2:10 | 5:40 | 8:00	5 DEUCE BIGALOW 2 12:30 | 2:30 | 4:30 | 6:30 | 8:30
3 SHARKBOY & LAVA GIRL 12:00 | 4:30 | 5:30 | 7:30	RE: THE ZOO

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS

COCA COLA vs PUREFOODS 4:45 pm GARY LEWIS AND THE PLAYBOYS LIVE
LAKERS vs MILW. BUCKS 7:00 pm October 28, Friday, 8 pm

The WORLD

Editor Lorente B. Gueco

Nigeria plane with 116 aboard crashes

FLIGHT 210 lost contact during an electrical storm several minutes after taking off. REUTERS

LAGOS—A Nigerian airliner with 116 people on board including some senior officials crashed shortly after taking off from Lagos en route to the capital Abuja, the government said on Sunday.

Bellview Airlines flight 210 took off at 8:45 p.m. (6:45 in Manila) on Saturday night and lost contact with the aviation tower minutes later during a heavy electrical storm.

Authorities located the wreckage of the Boeing 737-200 jetliner in Kabi, Oyo state, in southwestern Nigeria about 300 km north of Lagos, a police source said about 12 hours later. It was not clear if there were any survivors, the source added.

"The government has been able to confirm that Bellview flight 210 may have gone down, thereby ceasing out worst fears," Information Minister Frank Nweke told state radio earlier.

Emergency services immediately launched a search and rescue mission.

The plane was carrying 106 people, 110 passengers and six crew, authorities said.

Initially, it was not known whether the plane had crashed, been hijacked or had made an emergency landing.

But the pilot made a distress call minutes after takeoff on Saturday night, indicating the plane had a technical problem, a source at the presidency told Reuters.

State radio reported that seven of the high ranking government officials were on the plane, but did not name them.

The privately owned Nigerian airline is popular with expatriates. Western diplomats feared several of their citizens could also have been on board.

Bureau of Rights can each day between the port of Lagos—one of the world's biggest cities—and Abuja in the heart of Africa's most populous nation.

Boeing spokesperson Liz Bartlett told CNN by telephone from Seattle the company would work with the US National Transportation Safety Board if the board were asked to help with any investigation.

She said the 737 was the "workhorse of the world commercial jet fleet."

Bellview Airlines could not confirm the airliner had crashed 11 hours after it disappeared and concerned relatives of Lagos airport grew impatient with the lack of information.

"I am worried because nobody is talking to me," said Ismail Djellaludeen. Reuters

Wilma to 'rocket' toward Florida, says weatherman

KEY WEST, FLORIDA—RESIDENTS (SAID) tired, owners boarded up homes and businesses and emergency officials prepared rescue and relief plans as forecasters predicted Hurricane Wilma would pick up speed on a course toward Florida.

The southern half of Florida's peninsula was under a hurricane watching Sunday in anticipation of Wilma, a Category 2 storm with 160 kph winds. Although still far from the state, Wilma's outer bands managed to cause heavy flooding in a South Florida suburb.

About 140 people were in a Monte shelter, a hospital was evacuated, state officials commandeered gas supplies and workers assembled truckloads of water, ice and sandbags ordered to leave planned over the storm's melee in coastal port area the state Monday.

"The pace of preparing is rapidly moving into time of action as people are evacuating," Florida emergency management director Craig Fugate said.

Saturday became a historic and meaningful day for hurricane trackers and weather buffs when Tropical Storm Alpha formed south of the Dominican Republic as a record 22nd named storm for the Atlantic season. It marked the first time forecasters had to turn to the Greek alphabet for names in almost 50 years of naming storms. The previous record of 21 named storms had stood since 1933.

By 2 a.m. EST (31 a.m. in Manila), Wilma had taken a turn and began a slow rush toward the north-northeast. The storm had maximum sustained winds near 160 kph and was located about 90 km north of Cancun, Mexico, or about 305 km southwest of Key West.

Hurricane center director Max Mayfield predicted the storm would dramatically pick up speed later Sunday and its top winds would increase.

"It's really going to take off like a rocket," he said. "It's going to start moving like 20 kph."

The storm was expected to near Florida's southwest coast as a Category 1 or 2 hurricane early Monday. It would hit near the spot where Hurricane Charley barreled ashore last year, causing major damage in Punta Gorda and other places in southwest Florida.

13.2M ready-to-eat meals

Federal Emergency Management Agency spokesperson Gene H. Hatcher said evacuees using their dozens of military helicopters to 13.2 million ready-to-eat meals were standing by.

"We're ready for Wilma and, whatever the storm brings, we've got to go," Hatcher said.

Officials in the island chain of the Florida Keys issued a mandatory evacuation order Saturday, but many people ignored that mandate. Collier County also urged evacuations for coastal areas, such as Marco Island and parts of Naples.

To the north, Wilma's outer tentacles caused hip-deep flooding in some neighborhoods in the Fort Lauderdale area, forcing people out of at least 50 apartments and homes.

Gladys Sparrow, a 44-year-old home health care worker, said water that rose to 30 centimeters inside her home destroyed clothes and furniture, plus brought in bugs and trash.

"It's dirty, wet, muggy, everything," Sparrow said, estimating that 70 percent of her possessions were damaged.

Lower Keys Medical Center in Key West was evacuated of its eight patients on Sunday, with some going as far as Alabama.

State and federal officials said they had supplies and personnel outside of the areas expected to get hit. Gas supplies were also an issue, they said.

Two to 25 centimeters of rain was expected in southern Florida through Tuesday, with up to 30 centimeters in some areas. Category 2 hurricane can be accompanied by storm surge flooding of 1 1/2 to 4 meters. Battering waves could be on top of that.

Southwest Florida residents, some still rebuilding from Charley, made last preparations for Wilma amid fear and frustration.

At a shelter set up in Florida International University in west Miami Dade, Robert Lim, 48, of Key West, waited for the storm with his wife after evacuating the island city some 220 km south of Miami.

"We're treating it like a vacation," Lim said, before admitting class sessions were running high at the shelter. "Everybody's stressed out. Everybody's walking on eggshells." AP

Britain calls for EU ban on all imports of wild birds after parrot dies of bird flu

LONDON — BRITAIN IS PRESSING FOR a European Union (EU) ban on imports of all live wild birds from around the world after discovering that a South American parrot died from bird flu while in British quarantine.

At emergency talks in Brussels yesterday the parrot died of the same virus that has killed people, animal welfare minister Ben Bradshaw said his government wants a formal request from the EU to the European Commission for such a ban.

There was "considerable" EU support for such a ban, which would be imposed within a few coming week, he added.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), which Bradshaw oversees, said the government asked the commission to ban all "live wild birds" into Europe from anywhere in the world.

But import of poultry which are domesticated birds, would still be allowed, said a Defra spokesperson.

The European Union said now has banned bird imports from countries which have cases of avian flu, such as Romania, Thailand or Turkey, according to Defra.

Experts from Britain's Medical Research Council were due meanwhile to leave Sunday on a 10-day trip to China, Vietnam and Hong Kong to look at the way the disease was being monitored there and how to improve cooperation.

Bradshaw said in a BBC radio interview that the British government had been considering such a ban "for some time before the death of the parrot in June as happens that the formal request had been made now."

He said the European Commission would also have to consider whether a ban would boost the illegal trade in wild birds, although the authorities have also stepped up monitoring of smuggling recently because of fears of bird flu.

Meanwhile, public health experts quoted by the Sunday Telegraph said exotic birds smuggled into Britain would provide the "Trojan Horse" for the spread of bird flu.

The Sunday Times said it is estimated that 250,000 exotic birds a year, half of the annual total brought into Britain, are smuggled.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to animals (RSPCA) said the Royal Society for the Prevention of Birds (RSPB) both appealed for an EU ban on wild birds after Britain's announcement that the parrot had died of bird flu.

Scientists were still trying to determine whether the parrot from Southeast in Britain's histories died of the H5N1 strain hitting northeast Asia, threatening poultry stocks and killing more than 60 people there.

Dave Pearce, head of external affairs at the RSPCA, who pushed for the ban on wild birds, said Britain did not have the power alone to impose such a ban and had to rely on action taken at the European level. AFP

World failed to grasp scale of quake disaster, says UN official

MUZAFFARABAD, Pakistan — The international community failed to grasp the scale of the South Asian earthquake and more than two weeks after the disaster, the response to still not enough, a UN relief official said Sunday.

Rashid Khalikov, the UN humanitarian aid area coordinator in this quake-hit capital of Pakistani Kashmir, said international relief agencies were "still running to get" with the disaster, which killed more than 50,000 people and left more than three million homeless in different mountainous territory.

"Two weeks after the earthquake that devastated this region, everybody thought that the biggest problem was the inaccessible areas," he told reporters.

"In the first few days after the earthquake the world clearly did not comprehend the magnitude and complexity of the disaster.

"Even now we are still coming to grips with the needs of the people's needs as new information comes in from previously inaccessible areas."

He said UN agencies, working alongside the Pakistani army and independent nongovernmental groups, had distributed 60,000 tents — nowhere near enough to protect the millions of destitute from the increasingly cold nights.

Another 150,000 tents were in the UN pipeline but more would be needed if the world body is to prevent what Secretary General Kofi Annan called a possible "second wave" of deaths as winters bites in the Himalayan region.

"From a logistical point of view this is possibly the most challenging emergency relief operation that the international humanitarian community has ever faced," Khalikov said.

In Pakistan-administered Kashmir alone, "some 800,000 people, or 150,000 families, are believed to be without shelter," he said.

"The scale of this calamity is beyond the capacity of any one country. The support of the international community is vital and it is essential that donors contribute the necessary funds as soon as possible."

He said only some 300 million of 550 promised aid pledges had been received in response to the UN's flash appeal for $550 million for immediate relief operations.

The flash appeal for the Occidental Asian earthquake was more than 80 percent funded within 24 days of its launch.

Khalikov said the UN-side had given helicopters to help distribute aid and strengthen the region. This would rise to 12 in the coming days but were there the world body would not have enough aircraft to do the job, he said.

As for tents, the aid coordinator said the world was being scoured for more.

"All the tents available in the world are being eyed for this relief operation," he said. AFP

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Many foreigners have joined fight vs US forces in Iraq

By Claudia Parsons

BAGHDAD — MORE THAN 200 FOREIGN fighters have been captured in Iraq by US-led troops and Iraqi security forces since April and their nationalities include Israeli, Arab and British, a senior US commander said on Thursday.

Most came from other Arab states, Islamic Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch said in the military general of the Arab League, Amr Moussa, made a long-awaited visit to Baghdad in discussions how Arab countries could help Iraq with its security.

"Terrorists and foreign fighters" were responsible for some of the worst insurgent attacks, such as suicide car bombings, Lynch said. But he said US-led forces had failed several awards by arresting or killing many of them in recent months.

He told a news briefing 191 foreign fighters had been captured over past 6 months. 35 were detained since the start of April. An unspecified figure for the total number of guerrilla suspects captured were available, although some 12,000 are currently held in all, most of them Iraqis.

The countries of origin most represented were Egypt (78), Syria (56), Sudan (41) and Saudi Arabia (32). The list included several other Middle Eastern countries and a number of European states such as France (11) as well as non-Arabians and an American.

Lynch declined to give any further details about the one Israeli on the list, or the suspects from Ireland and anywhere Britain.

He said Iraq's al-Qaida leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was trying to bring in more foreign fighters because many of his Iraqi associates had been wounded up or killed.

"Zarqawi since January has lost 100 of his brothers," Lynch said. "What we've found is he's replacing his leaders with foreign fighters, presumably because they're more inclined to carry out those suicide attacks against the Iraqi people." Reuters

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Hello, Bunye?

THE REVELATION THAT MALACAÑANG IS CONsolidating its communications and public relations machinery under Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and the Presidential Communications Group adds fuel to the fire of public skepticism.

We think the public's worries about the administration's deepest motives is not centered on the idea itself.

EDITORIAL

Even a staunch anti-Arroyo senator like Sergio Osmeña III admits there may be a need for it. "In politics, in public service, one of the most important responsibilities of a public official is to communicate your vision, your message, to the entire citizenry," he told reporters last week. "That's why you have a spokesman; that's why you have a Bunye."

The problem is that the consolidation is taking place at the exact time reports of a possible emergency rule are sweeping the media. And that Bunye is now in charge of it.

In many respects, the genial Bunye has been an ideal spokesman for the President. He is fluent in the official languages, is almost always accessible, is normally graceful under pressure. Not least, he enjoys President Macapagal-Arroyo's confidence; unlike Jerry Barican, the public face/fervent who once spoke for the populist President Joseph Estrada, there is no similar disconnect between Bunye and the president he speaks for. They are both professional politicians.

Indeed, one can say that they both may be too professional. Since the Hello Garci scandal broke—or rather, since Bunye helped break the news about the alleged wiretapping controversy himself on June 4—both the President and her spokesman have conducted themselves at times as though political survival was the only virtue.

Bunye's own role in foisting what looks to be a grand deception on both the public and the House of Representatives, in the matter of the Garci/Jaco tapes, remains underinvestigated. An Inquirer special report has shown that the idea of presenting two compact disks to the Makabayang prime corps—one purportedly fake (the Garci/Jaco version) and the other allegedly original (the one which supposedly caught the President conversing with political opponent Gary Bendijo)—was hatched by a crisis committee a day or two before Bunye's surprise announcement.

It has been more than a month since that special report saw print, but Bunye (who was deputized in it as agonizing over the right thing to do) has not issued a denial or even a rebuttal. It was thus no surprise when Rep. Rodolfo Gelez called for a resumption of the joint committee hearing into the Garci/Jaco tapes, precisely because Bunye's continuing silence could be construed as consent: "This very serious article that enumerated very serious allegations about what was supposed to be behind the Garci tape [has] remained unrebutted and unanswered by Malacañang, especially the Palace spokesman, especially Secretary Bunye, who was literally quoted here."

Gelez, who broke publicly with the President at the height of the political crisis, may simply be looking for additional justification for his dramatic breakaway. But he does score a valid point. By sticking to the official line that there were two CDs, and then those came into his possession in mysterious circumstances, did Bunye, in fact, perjure himself before Congress?

That question acquires new meaning now—now that Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita has confirmed the plan to place Bunye in charge of the government's entire communications and public relations machinery.

Ostensibly enacted to the news about Bunye being named the government's "media czar" by accentuating the negative. "[There is] also the need of some people to control the news—in other words, being able to suppress what is not nice. Bunye is very good at doing the second," [Osmeña may know whereof he speaks, having once been allied with the President herself.]

But if Bunye did in fact resolve the personal agony he went through in the early days of June by embracing the crisis committee's plan to set a cover-up in motion, then we have no choice but to heed Osmeña's cautionary words. Unless the provenance of the Hello Garci tapes is established once and for all, and Bunye's role in it explained, every pronouncement of the new Presidential Communications Group will always be viewed with suspicion. Someone, somewhere, will always wonder: Is this original, or fake?

What's so special about Mendiola anyway?

THE LONGEST AVENUE IN THE COUNTRY IS NOT in Mindanao, the town where Manuel Roxas was born is Mindanao, the town where Manuel Roxas broke like a swing, a conversation camp with barbed wire, mile-of-razor wire, steel barricades, concertina coils and thousands of police guards everywhere. Times square in the Bonifacio Global City of the Metro Manila Development Authority have made the metropolis look like an extension of Baguio Lake with its long lines of fishcages. Except that these are farming homes.

Depending, however, on Gloria has maybe learned a pleasure as she barricades herself in Malacañang against the people she is supposed to serve—as she the tyrants of old, afraid of their subjects. All because she wants to have the people marry from Mendiola Bridge.

What's so special about Mendiola anyway? Why are the government and the people fighting over that little piece of land, less than one hectare in size. How is it one's hand is "Mendi"like"?

As Gloria wants to keep the distance millions of it by marching to Mendiola Bridge. The presence in 2001 of a mob there—Aw Dim's supporters then...that was poised to mark to the presidential palace, forced then President Estrada to formally leave Malacañang, giving Aw Dim no reason to cross the river. So Gloria sensed she some doing so to deter to her to avoid be just poetic justice of a tooth for a tooth, by Aw Dim is too paranoid to leave anything to chance. For the events in Malacañang Mendiola is like the Main Street and the Golan Heights in the Arab-Israeli arena, or the Berlin Wall between east and west Germany.

For the people, however, Mendiola is a symbol of freedom. This is the site of the Mendiola Massacre, where 18 farmers asking their grievances at a rally were shot dead by government troops. This is the site of the Chino Roces monument, where the late newspaper publisher was tossed down with water cannon along with other hundreds opposed to the 1990 Marcos. (The release of another water cannon down another group of protesters recently.) From this site, the people, therefore, want to raise their grievances.

Protesters will keep trying to occupy it like a piece of high ground in a real war. And the administration's will just as likely defend it with bombs, probably even and they lose it. But the more Mendiola is made off limits to them, the more it becomes desirable, the more the militants will try harder to take it. Capturing it would be a victory of sorts.

So Mendiola is like a genuine big arch that has its. Once blood is shed it has again, Mendiola will bless strength, and has blood with it.

What Aw Dim involves a fresh bit of psychology. Like a field commander gaining top territory in his effort to wear down a better defensive position, she should show promises to see Mendiola. What's wrong with that? Malacañang can be defended better by putting barricades across Mendiola Bridge itself. But if the street is open to a limited extent, it would have the desirability on the protesters. Because they wouldn't have to fight for it anymore.

It would be like Plaza Miranda, Diosdado Macapagal and the Liberal Party. They are open to rallies anytime, no permit necessary. But the protesters don't want to hold their rallies there. They want to hold them in Mendiola because they are banned from using it as a rally site. But banishment from Plaza Miranda, Diosdado Macapagal and the Liberal, and the militants will fight to rally in other places. The Tagalog have a saying for it: Ang ano ng dated, pero ang ano noong bawal is prohibited is more desirable).

Aw Dim is pouring on wealth and lots of policemen as unnecessary risk by insisting on defending Mendiola. That street has no real strategic value. The only reason there are policemen and desk officers there this time they have been brainwashed to obey orders. But like a compassionate commander who orders a retreat to save his troops, Aw Dim should see enough for her troops to do something similar. Giving them medals and open promotions a little "cosmetic in Iraq." Unlike the Filipino, Mendiola is not worth dying for, is not worth the life of a policeman.

With every dispersal, the people only get angrier and more of them are joining protest rallies. Sine allow them to march and rally anymore, they will soon get tired of rallies which will become no commonplace.

The line of rallies since Cielo Estrada got fed-gate for her little sister's life has held hands. Those desperate farmers and fishermen who have come to the city seeking from the Agrarian Reform and Southern Luzon in order to see their grievances are really very angry and are one of those might just be foolish and desperate enough to try something deadly.

The farmers' assembly should open the eyes of Mrs. Arroyo and her allies to the severity in the countryside. They have to do something to alleviate it...and somewhere it as they are doing when they make to the DMZ.

Any false hope talking for "excess thinking and energy" from the countryside is composed of amateurs to make signup with claims, true warriors, are rooted dispersed of a rally. "rooms thinner and noisy" more hardest noisy. Any sensible person will see that the hardest matters of the Day only drive more people to the other side.

Aw Dim should not be one of those who always goes when she wants. She only claims to be the "president" of all Filipinos. She should act like one.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: Pew Gentleman Mike Arroyo remarried home to launch a new source Encouraged by the big picnic won by Manny Pacquiao and into other Filipino heroes in Las Vegas recently, Big Mike decided to start a professional boxer (although some boxing would be more appropriate for him).

His ring name: Money Talcum.

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

Black and white

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

CORAZON AQUINO HAS HER SECRETS having helped Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo become President. "I feel guilty to the fact that I thought that GMA would be a better executive for the country," she told the Black and White Movement [sic] in November. "When Cardinal Sin and I made our decision, that was easy, very easy since because we thought that GMA could do better than Erap." That is not the case today. "Definitely, definitely [that] do Garci's but not been as attractive."

Well, she paid dying there is that Gary has apologized for having been party to the crime that is GMA. The reason I have been reluctant to pound Erap and fellow activists is that I have to hear the others, mainly Diday Robredo and Bill Lat, who are just as guilty as Gary of the crime, if not more so, apologize as well. Militant was more responsible for causing civil society to mobilize it appears it was behind GMA all the way—it will take years before they never give in regain to everything. If at all. And Lat was more responsible for giving the last electoral a pretext of legitimacy by throwing Hamilton's counted flawless it was "personally" to mean." Pero Joe Ges, no wonder he has disappeared in shame.

Their out is for GMA not just to apologize for its crimes. He can be there not just to receive Gary's apologies. Many people have been there with. Assuming the Peace Bonds should be a way in that direction for Binay. Revealing the real results of the elections should be another big bill. There is no resolution without resolution.

But I'm still bothered by one things about Gary's apology.

The first is that the apologizes for the wrong thing. No one particularly wants that he helped GMA become president. We all do. What it chose to apologize for? Taking part in the struggle to oust Erap was something to be proud of, even if it produced the many results of having GMA in power. We are all sinners in the Eye, we are fallible like Adam. We cannot atone for them. But we are right to fight Erap in the same way that we were right to fight Marcos. It means, firstly, that creating a "crisis—or worse, a scenario—is not a matter of necessary but of choice, depending on whether there is a "tolerable replacement" or not. It means, secondly, deciding in terms of principles and not of the people affected by the situation, no wonder the successor is loved or not. And it means, thirdly, thinking like a peacemaker, reversing what is to some and what is right.

I remember Erap. I think it because I believed ousting Erap was a categorical imperative. He had betrayed the public trust. I accepted GMA despite the fact that I distrusted her for hiding under the hat, as under Cory's skirt, because that was what the Constitutional formulated. The two president succeeds the president in the event of vacancy. That was never a problem. The problem was that a group of people who thought GMA was their personal sanctimony to back her up despite her obvious betrayal of the people of Erap it; indeed, who continued to think like powerbrokers and, believing, she would be a better dictatorship as well as FIL, helped her close halo of the presidency. Still believe that. Even if GMA is clinched. But powerbrokers, looking this time for another personality as an alternative to GMA herself.

I personally have no problem accepting he Cardinal Sin and Cory Aquino's contention that GMA happened. But as I've been saying again and again, when GMA goes, it won't be a case of the presidency being vacated, it will be a case of the presidency never having been occupied by GMA in the first place. The one elected was the one who got the most votes in the elections. The electorate is clear as black and white: GMA is not the elected president, he is have no mental problems. The late elections were a shame, let us have real elections. The alternative is not someone a group of powerbrokers may demand, it is someone only the voters may declare. The one elected that has been elected all this time is the people. It's time we lovingly relinquish their throne.

The fact is that Gary, and Cory, and Ramos and other groups can talk alternatives all they want, but all there's do is leave us black and blue.

No permit, no rally

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

WHEN YOU READ BP 880, YOU WILL FIND THAT, in general, it makes a lot of sense. But then the wording of it can be colored by one's mere of what a good society should be like or by how much power (1) or good reasons decisions affect one's life.

People with the title of the law in almost middle idealist. "The Act Banning The Free Exercise By The People Of The Right Peaceably To Assemble And Petition The Government And For Other Purposes." This is followed by a declaration of policy: "The constitutional right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances is essential to the full exercise of the sovereign and stability of the State. To this end, the State shall ensure the free exercise of such right without prejudice to the rights of others to life, liberty and equal protection of the law."

It is important to remember that we are dealing here with not just any kind of right. We are dealing here with the right of assembly and petition, which is a exponent of the freedoms of expression. Historically, the right of peaceable assembly is the primary right, the right upon which to assemble, is inherent and international right, as it the guarantees would read: "the right of the people peaceably to assemble" in order to "petition the government." Thus we are dealing with what jurisprudence identifies as a "preferred right," which the law surrounds with protection more vigorous than other rights.

For ordinary rights, like for instance the right to use the roads or to before freeze/silence noise, the law may impose "reasonable" and "non-unreasonable." For "preferred rights," however, the standards for allowable limitation are more stringent.

In the early stages of Philippine jurisprudence, the accepted rule was that speech, together with assembly and petition, may be curtailed when it "creates a dangerous tendency which the State has the right to prevent." This standard was also labeled the "dangerous tendency" rule. All it requires for the limitation of assembly and petition is that there be a rational connection between the speech and the evil feared. For instance, if one says, "Let's start a fire," under the "dangerous tendency rule" that would already be punishable even if the possibility of a fire actually taking place is remote.

The dangerous tendency rule has been rejected by jurisprudence. Thus I heard one learned constitutional lawyer advocating its resurrection). Now it replaces to the "clear and present danger rule." The rule says: "The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent. It is a question of proximity and degree." For difficulty, "Words can, in fixed times and whether the gist of the evil, discussed by an unprohibiting jurisdiction, a question of fact speech as it is necessary to avoid the danger."

Does BP 880 accept this rule? The first sentence where an application for a permit for an assembly is filed. "It shall be the duty of the mayor or any official acting in his behalf to issue or grant upon application made at least five days before the scheduled assembly, unless the public assembly will create a clear and present danger to public order, public safety, public convenience, public morals or public health."

Coming on second rule hand, BP 880 prescribes the "additional permissive requirement" for "maximum tolerance." A definite maximum tolerance as "the highest degree of restraint that the military, police and other peacekeeping authorities shall observe during a public assembly or in the dispersal of the same." Specifically, BP 880 also states: "Water gun, water cannons, blinding cameras, or any similar anti-riot device shall not be used unless the public assembly is attended by armed violence or serious threats of violence, or deliberate destruction of property."

There, then, is what remains in BP 880's statement of the "clear and present danger rule" which, I believe, are misplaced: I am referring to the words "public convenience." Many people have very low tolerance for inconvenience. Should such a low tolerance be used as a criterion for restricting "preferred rights"? I do not think so. Precisely they are protected over inferior rights such as the right not to be inconvenienced.

Even as early as 1907, our Court could already say, "It is unfair to be expected that those on less favorable social status will be permitted to exercise their rights to protest against grievances whether real or imagined, because on such occasions, the feeling is always wrought to a high pitch of excitement, and the greatest the grievance and the more intense the feeling, the greater will be the danger of the disturbance, essence of the freedom over their unreasonable fulness."

In other words, ensuring inconveniences in the course of exercising the right of assembly and petition is not criminal condition. Or, as Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes once said in 1937, "The right to free speech, however, is not to be confused with the right to use the streets or parks for communication of views on any matter that may interest the public." There is no valid reason to mix the logic.

Also, such standard is not acceptable under the present regime.

Let them eat cake

COMMENTARY

Fr. Ferdinandel Sanchez, Ph.D.

THE SEEMING CONFLUENCE OF POLITICAL and economic crises in the Philippines has become wary by alarming and worrisome. The expanded takeover powers law—that is not to be fully implemented, and which is supposedly meant to get the country back on track to fiscal stability, amidst the worsen the already deepening national depression. Pilgrims, latest a readiness to expand political crimes in the name of "state of emergency" are not unfavorable. They're for entertainment purposes.

Anyconomic crisis, however, is different. It will hit one down to home for too many. In fact, it will hit them where it hurts most: their economic, social and political well. It's death: too conscious, and has painfully real.

True or not, the 2006 law is supposedly meant, among other things, to come off a full blown economic crisis by raising revenue for a cash-strapped government. Government has to raise funds for most to expand and improve basic services. And there's the rub. Why it? This is where the inconsistency and calculations of those who claim people must now swallow this bitter pill are particularly galling, because they are well aware that the real problem is, perhaps, they don't even realize the full implication of what they say: I get the suspicion that the latter is most often the case.

There is much to the opinion that as a consolidation of power, the expanded president's taxation powers are real. Though, it is well for them to remember that regardless are fashioned by hands that are real. Strong gifts need to be swallowed or eaten. The question is what? To begin with, the needed bitter pill must not be too bitter that it cannot be swallowed or swallowed, or too "intentioned," too "victimized." Let's be realistic, no government can catch a few of corruption. The difference between developed nations and laggard ones is not that the former have no corruption problems and the latter have it. Rather, they have managed to minimize such that much of the contemplative will relate to or the subtle of the majority of the people. In laggard nations, on the other hand, corruption and wastage of resources are rampant and run across the board. BP 880 prescribes the "additional permissive requirement" for "maximum tolerance." A definite maximum tolerance as "the highest degree of restraint that the military, police and other peacekeeping authorities shall observe during a public assembly or in the dispersal of the same." Specifically, BP 880 also states: "Water gun, water cannons, blinding cameras, or any similar anti-riot device shall not be used unless the public assembly is attended by armed violence or serious threats of violence, or deliberate destruction of property."

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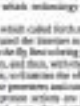
Flash mobs as protest

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



IN NEW YORK CITY, ON JULY 2, 2003, BY 3:30AM, unrelated, selling recipients to assemble at the food court in Grand Central Station, where organizers gave them by the copies of the New York Review of Books they were holding a gift tissue who showed up printed instructions regarding what to do next.

The result, according to media reports, was that shortly after 7 p.m., about 200 people had, in groups of 10 to 15, fanned out to the rest of the Grand Central food court in Grand Central Station, applauded loudly for 15 seconds, then left.

Media reports (which were bemused) however, the phenomenon was baptized: "flash mobs," with participants being called "smart mobs." Organizers of such events have included a number of people showing up at Macy's, posing as a corpse, and ordering a pastrami sandwich during the "love rally," a crowd at a store shop in Soho pretending to be mannequins in the window from 9pm to midnight, a crowd of people perched on a name bridge in Central Park making bird noises. There was a case of "direction, noon Sunday" in San Francisco.

CNN reported that the first European flash took place in Berlin on July 24, 2004, when 300 people converged a music store, breaking into for non-existent sales. On Aug. 5, at 4:01 p.m. in Berlin, about 40 people in the middle of a busy street took out their mobile phones and shouted, "yes, you!" and then applauded.

In Washington, D.C., on Aug. 18, 60 Canadians, however, had a serious origin. Protesters in Washington, D.C. and Toronto have used the Internet to send out a call for people to participate in certain political events. Most participants, they were in Washington, D.C. and Toronto, were unaware of the political purpose of the gathering.

Other events in Toronto and Washington, D.C. were more overtly political. In Toronto, on Aug. 20, 2004, a flash mob of 1,000 people descended on a Toronto shopping mall to protest the Republican National Convention. Police, however, broke up the protest, arresting 227 people. Police said they had received information that the protesters were planning to disrupt the convention by blocking streets and intersections.

Flash mobs are not only used by those who generally associate with anti-establishment causes. In Washington, D.C., and Toronto have used the Internet to send out a call for people to participate in certain political events. Most participants, they were in Washington, D.C. and Toronto, were unaware of the political purpose of the gathering.

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New dev't models needed to lift poor

THE POLITICAL CRISIS IS SEIZING INTO ITS fifth month. Daily there seems to be no clear exit in its end. In financial and apparently well-meaning groups or individuals have suggested some solutions out of the fix. But with every proposition, the more the crisis seems to be complicated.

The ultimate and unwilling victim in this kind of predicament are the ordinary Filipinos who must have undergone a schizophrenia,

relies country rule of anyone in the last five months. Now, it was angry mixed with exasperation. Why the need to put up with a President who spoke to a Catholic official at the height of the elections, and yet remains adamant about staying in the presidency after admitting few "lapse in judgment"?

After the confusion comes disillusionment. Rightist movements mingle with the left and vice versa. Politicians jump from one party to another. Even the majority bloc in the assembly and back to the majority. Administration people and many belong to the opposition, or the other way around. Anti-dumb to become independent.

Still, vile cannot help but become cynical at times. When a former top official suggests a person be rewarded the status in for signing a sovereignty petition or, perhaps, the highest office of the land? When a team in the elections comes up with an appeal, a the same just-now groups or a for empty warning promises? When a congressman makes a statement on his mind accepting or rejecting the report of don't know junior economics can be impeachment issue, does it mean he's grasped or he was announced to remember personal on drive?

It is not hard to understand why Filipinos become resigned to their plight when all possible means to ferret out the truth are subverted, but on to until. Feeling the ineffectiveness taught by the experience of the majority, they would rather ponder the help of the Almighty.

I was reminded of the myriad of feelings while I was reviewing the issues preparatory to formulating ICSE's Rural Development Program. It somehow seemed me that the issues looked a no like two) never changed, the same issues surfaced just as they were in the 1970s and 1980s.

Landlessness in the countryside remains pervasive, and poverty among small farmers is still widespread. The 10-year period for the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, which was supposed to end in 1998, was extended, and to date the CARP has yet to accomplished its goal. Of the 8.1 million hectares target of Agrarian Reform, 5.5 million hectares or 67 percent of the 8.3 million hectares covered by CARP have been distributed as of Dec. 31, 2004. This report is based on the number of Emancipation Patents (EPs) and Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOAs) issued, not on the actual number of beneficiaries or land acquired. I am plagiarizing myself on the lands that have been purportedly awarded. Reports also reveal that the accomplishment in land acquisition and distribution are merely "paper successes," given the many TENURIAL interferences and the delaying tactics and non-cooperation of landowners.

In a recent policy forum on agrarian reform that I attended, a staff from the NGO-consultant, representing 111 farmer beneficiaries (FBs) based in two barangays in Camiguin, Batangas, could not contain her anger and frustration over DARs disorderly processes and lack of transparency in land transfer. The Farmers were awarded EPs on the farmer property in 1988, only to find out that the same piece of land had been sold to Asturias Chemical Industries, which got another title in 1994, or few years after the land was awarded to them. Consolidated cases were filed and won by the FBs in 2000. Four years after, the farmers still have not received the land. Asturias Chemical, the developer, declaring the property as mineral land, and rendering the EPs/CLOAs null and void. The farmers protested but their complaint has yet to be addressed. The farmers had been paying for the land, which they might not get to own after all. This is a typical case.

There are about 17 existing laws that provide a policy framework for land use. Most common among these are the CARP of 1988, the Indigenous People's Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997, the Local Government Code of 1991, the National Integrated Protected Areas System Decree of 1992, the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998, the Water Code of 1976, Act of 1996. These laws, however, were formulated using a sectoral and fragmented approach, consistently causing confusion among the stakeholders. In the end, these laws failed to meet the priorities for land use, to ensure that majority of the affected sectors would be benefited, and to put possession and ownership rights in the hands of the rightful owners. All these equity issues, the existence of other stakeholders, especially those with political and economic influence, have led to the displacement of farming communities and indigenous peoples, the proliferation of informal settlements, the production of land use conflicts, and the degradation. A draft National Land Use Act (NLUA), filed during the 1st Congress, remains until today a draft in the House of Representatives, with no session yet from the concerned Senate Committee.

On the matter of access to credit, fully extension from local and foreign banks, the farmers have limited time to avail easier lending for the poor. Whether formal financial institutions indeed alleviate the funds for the use of the poor is not enough to double. The high risks and huge costs of extension class go with microfinance lending have served to discourage many rural banks and other formal institutions from expanding their exposure beyond 35 percent of their portfolio.

All sorts of screening and mobilization have been resorted to for more redistribution and greater social equity and productivity among the rural poor. But structural obstacles practically undermine the lowly farmers and small stakeholders all the way from production to marketing. These obstacles—market monopolies, meager budgets and low level of investments in infrastructure and support facilities, bureaucratic "red tape," and self-competition induced by globalization, among others—have left these people with no choice but to cope up and to close their eyelids.

There must be some other solutions. There ought to be alternatives for the rural poor. These realities are being developed and tested. But these alternative structures and approaches should have to be put in place and, more urgent today, should work to narrow down the social and economic divide in the countryside.

The INQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

Embodiment of political crisis

LETTERS

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL ARROYO is the embodiment of the present political crisis just as Ferdinand Marcos was in the 1970s and 1980s, and Joseph Estrada in 2001.

But GMA, to her discredit, copied the unpopularity tactics of the others. Whether she realizes it or not, her hand-like Marcos or gambler she is-was forced to play its first card with every in-line line.

Marcos had to impose martial law. GMA grew about it through its brave policies, directives, ordinances and plans. She had EPZ and pop culture and composed charter change.

The Arroyo presidency, in fact, can also boast of a record-breaking economic crisis and overwhelming incidence of human rights violations.

How do we forget GMA's social ease policy in Mindanao that killed, displaced and traumatized thousands of Moro families?

What do we call the ongoing military "bombing" of Moro Muslim families in Maguindanao del Norte?

How do we explain all the extreme poverty and unemployment?

What is there to be proud of in being branded as the second most dangerous place in the world to live?

Let's look at the whole picture. One does not have to think hard to conclude that there is more to be in progress today. What we are seeing is a fundamental regime holding under the guise of national security, national stability and democracy. Democracy is still under.

As Jesus, the old disciple did not pretend. But:

GMA! I simply

wanted where I know love calls of God. I wonder if it is the voice God who told her to have the Valenzuela priests and nuns in the Oct. 12 prayer-in-the-car demonstration.

I dare say that GMA is the worst President this country has ever had. And she, too, tried God!

—JOSE ATIENZA JR.,
Kalipunan ng mga Kamayan ng Pilipinas,
AKA Bayanihan Sr.,
Mayakan Diliman, Diliman, QC

Unworthy SSS employees

LAST SEPT. 23, I WENT TO THE MANDALUYONG Assistance Center of the main office of the Social Security System. The center opened around 7 a.m. The security guards were polite. I went directly to Window 38A. The person assigned there was very accommodating and I finished my business in five minutes. There are provided on Windows 36, 38 and 40. It was six hour windows than the prohibitive number).

1. The persons assigned to these windows came in late: 8:45 a.m. at Window 40; 8:50 a.m. at Window 38; and 8:15 a.m. at Window 36.

2. The SSS employee behind Window 40 started calling processors from one line at about 8:45 a.m.

3. The SSS employee behind Window 38 started working at 8:30 a.m., attending first to a processor who was with her when she came in. I said her three cups of [illegible] who came in earlier. But she seemed bad words, thought to [illegible] herself said that she was not there for any business with the SSS.

4. The SSS employee behind Window 36 started working at 8:15 a.m., giving priority to the papers of her three processors with her.

5. I had No. 4 in the line. When I got to Window 36, the person behind it angrily said it was not yet my turn to be interviewed, because she was still attending to her "long-time" processors.

The reason the SSS opens at 7 a.m. is to give time to SSS members and pensioners who have to report for work or transact other businesses for the day. The early SSS employees assigned at Window 36, 38 and 40 do not observe their assignments. They are also betraying the SSS secret to objectives.

—ALBERTO S. [illegible],
[illegible] Bldg. 5,
Mapagsapi Village 2, Quezon City

A dying health care system

THE ALLIANCE OF HEALTH Workers would like to add to the broad framework provided by the editorial "Poor health," (PDI, 8/29/05).

Here is a summary of the unprecedented difficulty faced by our members in frontline health interventions:

- Rural health units and barangay health centers can no longer provide the primary health care services that they are supposed to provide (e.g., immunizations, family education, basic medications). Some midwives even dip into their meager salaries to buy urgently needed medicines for patients.
- Emergency and district hospitals have either closed down or have been handed [illegible] to municipal governments which don't have enough funds to operate hospitals. There [illegible] report lack supplies and medicines and are easily overwhelmed, only as hospitals charge even indigent patients an exorbitant operating.
- Provincial, regional and specialty hospitals are overflowing with patients because rural health units, as well as emergency and district hospitals can't attend to their patients' needs for lack of facilities and capabilities. Many poor patients are not admitted at all, or choose or just go home because they can't endure the long lines and charge slips. Many of those admitted have to [illegible] of getting sick because they don't have money for medicines and other medicines needed.
- The Department of Health's main office and its centers for health and development (regional offices) also intentionally remove the whole health care system from [illegible] and [illegible] to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Across the NATION

Hagedorn challenges Batangas gov to duel

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY —Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn, head of the government's anti-jueteng task force and this city's mayor, yesterday said he refused to be drawn into a word war with Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez after the latter described him as a "mad dog" for alleging that the illegal numbers game had resurfaced in Batangas.

HAGEDORN

"If by calling me names Governor Sanchez is issuing a form of challenge in public to end my person and character, I gladly accept the challenge," Hagedorn said in a statement e-mailed to the Inquirer. "I will gladly face him man to man or any weapon of his choice, including a duel using the famous world-famous Bronie Shotwiler, the Batangas two-liner. He is desperate, just like most of us in mortal combat," he added.

Sanchez, on 30 May strilled Hagedorn a bang one, a Batangueño slang for "mad dog," after a journalist asked the governor's reaction on the latter's alleged statement that he (Hagedorn) couldn't run reelected in Batangas and other parts of Luzon.

"Bang-ow siya. Baka ako ang sagpa ya jueteng. Bahit siyoutam na hamakit na ang jueteng! (He's a mad dog. He could be behind the jueteng operations. How did he know that jueteng has resumed?)" Sanchez said.

"I'm the governor here. I should know better than him. How can anyone dare know anything about the supposed resumption of jueteng," he added.

Hagedorn lamented Sanchez's verbal attack as he denied the allegation. "I have never issued any statement that jueteng has resurfaced in Batangas. This is a brazen lie, a nasty rumor that the gullible governor in Cloverleaf and intrigue and irresponsibility responded to by instigating my personal and office."

He said Sanchez could have called him privately should he smell such statements. "Any sober, reasonable political leader would have done so. Instead he resorted to verbal abuse and ridiculed me in public. This is deplorable, to say the least," Hagedorn said.

Hagedorn said the records would show that he continued to maintain that local officials and the Philippine National Police have stepped organized syndicates run jueteng in Northern and Central Luzon. Aurelio Tigulo and the National Capital Region police chief Arturo Lomibao.

Only sporadic reports of guerrilla-type jueteng operations, which are more of scatter than organized illegal gambling circles have been recorded by the Anti-Jueteng Task Force from Regional Archbishop Oscar Cruz and those reported by the media, he said.

"I am amazed that a character like Sanchez whose origins come from the very bowels of the underworld in the provincial capital in Batangas could be so naive and gullible as to believe in rumors. For this lapse, I am so amazed and feel so sorry for him," he said.

However, Hagedorn said calling me a "mad dog" is another thing. "His Excellency would simply allow this to go unchallenged. Not now. Not ever. I am averse to engaging Governor Sanchez in a word war. If he's spoiling for a fight, then let's fight. Stop talking. Name the time and place and leave of combat, I will be there," Hagedorn said.

Prior to his election as mayor of this city Hagedorn killed two police officers during the dead-of-last years in self-defense and was acquitted by the courts for the slayings.

He said he was also the city's jueteng for first gave up his illegal numbers game before which he was elected in 1992.

ROUNDUP

Funds sought for airport

BOO, Sulu—The provincial government of Sulu is asking P40 million from the national government to continue the long stalled work on the site at port runway. Gov. Sacpaten Loong said he has also written the AFP-US Joint Special Operations Task Force for assistance. Marcel Angot, officer-in-charge of the Air Transportation Office (ATO) here, lamented the long delay in the development of the airstrip. Work by the Army Engineering Battalion started in 1994. But after a few months of work, it stopped due to the non-release of funds by the DOTC despite repeated follow-ups. Angot said.

Ed Dared, PDI Mindoro Bureau

800 cases of dengue fever

TAGUDAN CITY—The Department of Health's Eastern Visayas (CHD-8) reported that 800 persons had been infected with dengue fever in region from January to September this year. The number, however, was lower than the 889 cases reported over the same period last year. Boyd Cerro, DOH-8 assistant secretary said the cases included four children who died due to dengue fever. "The number of dengue fever cases in the region is another major concern because that fever was previously under control and remained on a particular area," Cerro said. Leyte registered the highest number of cases with 500 followed by Southern Leyte (11), Samar (19), Eastern Samar (19), Biliran (28) and Northern Samar (11).

Joey Cabrido, PDI Visayas Bureau

5 nabbed for drugs

MAMALAM, Pampanga—Police arrested five suspected illegal drug peddlers in a two-day operation last week in this sleepy Capas town. Metropolitan police chief Supt. Rolando Nana said the suspects were in custody on Rizal and Quezy Bukal Streets, adding that they responded to Reynaldo Aguilar's complaints. Reynaldo Lingad, Edgar Flores, Philip Cruz, Ramon Ribera and Jhon Jed Fabulado were charged with violation of the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002 (Republic Act 9165).

Jun Mendiz, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Tricycle fare hike

BOHOL CITY—Tricycle drivers here have started collecting a P3 increase in the regular fare of passengers after the city government approved their petition for a fare increase. The increase, which took effect Oct. 19, raised the regular fare to P8 for the first 2 kilometers and P4 for students and senior citizens. An additional P1.50 will be charged for every succeeding kilometer. About 2,500 passenger tricycle operate here. But city's mayor made 270 less portation. Mayor Antonio Beltrosano warned all tricycle drivers and operators to ensure all the requirements before inspecting the new fare. He meant that all passenger tricycles must display the matrix rate, have their complete driving numbers, and secure their driver's license and identification card to be valid.

Felipe Salvo, PDI Visayas Bureau

New jail for prisoners

CAGAYAN CITY—Some 100 inmates of this Subprovincial jail here moved to the Provincial Rehabilitation Center (PRC), which was designed to accommodate drug addicts, mainly Sub-Saharan migrants, provincial jail warden, said corruption and other problems regarding the provincial jail prompted them to relocate the inmates to the PRC, which was not being used. At the new site, inmates have better breathing space with six cells that can accommodate 20 persons each. The PRC has also bigger grounds, where inmates can take their exercise and larger receiving areas for visiting relatives. Rudy Tactor Suntua, a provincial board member, said the ground-level radio DZSR, that the land where the old provincial jail site would be converted into a commercial complex.

Ed Dared, PDI Mindoro Bureau

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YOUR FUTURE IS IN THE SKIES

DOLE levies P8M worth of sugar to pay workers

HACIENDA LUISITA, TARLAC City—The Department of Labor and Employment has levied 8,000 bags of sugar worth P8 million as payment for the salaries of 1,971 Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union (Cudal) workers on Friday.

Cudlu president Ricardo Ramos said the bags of sugar he (Cudlu) will soon sold and the proceeds would be given to union members tomorrow. The amount covers 21 days of salary, 13th month pay and other bonuses for 2001.

The DOLE decision came after Central Azucarera de Tarlac (CAT) confirmed that it could not make the money to pay about P8.6 million in back wages and bonuses due to striking workers.

The withdrawal of sugar completed on the Aug. 11 writ of partial execution issued by Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas. Its implementation was delayed after the CAT management asked for 20 days to raise the money.

The writ allowed the DOLE sheriff "to levy company property that would satisfy the amount due to workers if no payment was immediately forthcoming."

With the payment of the back wages, the Cudlu workers and management may answer for final negotiations.

Ramos said the Cudlu and CAT management would only resolve the reinstatement of union officials who were ordered reinstated by the DOLE after the agency assumed jurisdiction over the labor conflict.

He said the CAT management agreed to reinstate 31 of the 35 union officers earlier dismissed. Two of the officers volunteered for resign to avoid disrupting the negotiations.

The remaining issue to be settled is the new collective bargaining agreement (CBA), Instead of the usual two-year CBA, Ramos said the management was asking for a five-year reinstatement while it is to process its clearances. *Jo Marticio-Clemente with reports from Russell Arnaiz, PIA Central Luzon desk*

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Death of cop baffles probers

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Police probers are puzzled over the death of the chief of the investigation division of the Batangas City police who was found dead with a bullet wound in the head inside his vehicle early Saturday morning.

City police chief Supt. Pilo Nino said they had yet to make an official statement on the mysterious death of Insp. Fernando Hondagan, 47.

Hondagan's body was discovered by a tricycle driver inside the privately-owned Toyota Revo (Hondagan's vehicle) parked on the right side of his home, he said. "They also recovered an empty bullet shell inside the vehicle."

Asked if Hondagan might have committed suicide, Nino said: "We will do not have any basis to say that."

Nino described Hondagan as a respectable police officer and chief investigator.

He said investigators were not discounting the possibility that Hondagan's death had something to do with his job as chief investigator of the city police.

In Calamba City in Batangas, two men were killed while another was seriously wounded in a gunfight between drunken men on Thursday night.

Provincial police director Senior Supt. Francisco Ibay Mora identified the fatalities as Fabian Mendoza, 60, and Cristino Cortegal, 44, both of Barangay Calamias, Talisay. Mendoza, PIA South-ern Luzon Bureau

LGUs to get back ₱17-B withheld IRA

By Rony G. Amorato
PIA Negros Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—SOME 17.5 BILLION in accumulated amounts withheld by the national government since 1999 from the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) will be released soon to local government units (LGUs).

Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz said President Macapagal-Arroyo, in a visit here on Oct. 14, informed him of the decision to give to the LGUs portions of their IRAs that had been withheld.

Arnaiz, a close ally of the President, the League of Governors and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap) were collating documents to support the release of the amount.

Monetization

During her visit here to grace the opening of the Oriental Negros Baghuan Festival, the President said she would want the LGUs' withheld share released through "monetization" as soon as documentation was completed, Arnaiz said.

By monetization, Arnaiz explained, is either the Land Bank of the Philippines or the Development Bank of the Philippines would extend loans to the LGUs equivalent to their share of the amount withheld, with the national government paying for the loans.

"We are having a series of meetings among members of the league and Ulap with some key Cabinet officials from the Finance and local government departments for the release of the money," Arnaiz said.

He said the governors' league and the Ulap had been requesting Malacañang since early this year to release the money in view of a Supreme Court ruling in 2004 that withholding any portion of the IRA was illegal and unconstitutional.

Since 1999, ₱1 billion of the IRA have been withheld and placed under the so-called Local Government Service Equalization Fund (LGSEF).

The LGSEF was a brainchild of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) as administration and mandated by Executive Order No. 46, issued by the ousted president on Dec. 7, 1998.

Originally, coined as the "Program for Devolution and Adjustment and Equalization," the LGSEF was designed "to facilitate the process of enhancing the capacities of local government units to the discharge of the functions and services devolved to them by the national government."

Under the General Appropriations Acts of 1999, 2000 and 2001, ₱1 billion from the IRA was set aside for each year "for the funding requirements of projects and activities arising from the full and efficient implementation of devolved functions and services of local government units."

The Arroyo administration continued implementing the LGSEF in the remained budget of 2002.

But the Supreme Court ruled that "local government units shall have a just share, as determined by law, in the national taxes which shall be automatically released to them."

The High Tribunal also asserted that withholding the IRA violates the mandate of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, particularly Section 286 which states that "the share of each local government unit shall be released, without need of any further action, directly to the provincial, city, municipal or barangay treasurer ... and which shall not be subject to any lien or holdback that may be imposed by the national government for whatever purpose."

Self-reliant town builds classrooms

ALAMEL, SARANGANI—WITH FISCAL PROblems hounding the government, local officials, the community and the private sector realized they would have to pool their resources to build more classrooms for the only science high school in Central Mindanao.

Southern Philippine Power Corp. (SPPC), the Coronadal Mangkusong Inc. (CMPI), the Alabel municipal government, and the Parent-Teachers Community Association (PTCA) contributed funds to raise the amount.

On Thursday, the new four-classroom building of the Alabel National Science High School SANHIS), worth about ₱3.1 million, was inaugurated in a simple ceremony attended by those who helped build it and officials from the Department of Education.

Sarangani schools Division superintendent Deborah Ishrako hailed the project as a proof that the community could do something without necessarily relying on the national government for help.

Ishrako credited Gov. Miguel Dominguez for encouraging and harnessing strong linkages among the local leaders, the community and the private sector in the province.

Dominguez said the private sector has been helping the province in development work.

Since 1996, private groups, such as the CMPI and SPPC, have been helping the municipal government, as part of their "corporate social responsibilities to the community," he said.

Aside from helping in the construction of the building, SPPC and it would donate audiovisual aids and provide training and scholarships for teachers in 11 schools here and in Malapatan, Aguilar, Tboli, ₱PR Mindanao Bureau

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Erap elated over admission of mistake by Cory, Bro. Eddie

From page A1

Party-list Rep. Etta Rosales said Aquino's and Villanueva's statements showed the increasing political isolation of Ms Arroyo.

"They [her critics] no longer trust that she can change," the Akbayan representative said in a phone interview.

A dead end

"That's the impact. It's a dead end. What is happening is the rapid political isolation and moral disintegration of the Arroyo leadership, so they don't believe that she has the capacity to reconcile with the opposition and work for genuine reforms," said Rosales.

Rosales, chair of the House committee on human rights, said the administration appeared to be heading "toward an implosion."

"People are getting out of the administration and this is broadening the ranks of the opposition, although the opposition is not united as you want want it to be," she said.

Divided GMA forces

This has resulted in "a division of ranks within GMA forces," Rosales added.

Rosales cited what she said was dissension within the ranks of the majority coalition in the House of Representatives.

"People can look at it in a different way. But you know Cory. Once she takes a position, she sticks to it. The fact that she ... has repented supporting GMA [only shows] that GMA has reached a point where she is incapable of reform."

"When Cory says she regrets it, she still wants reconciliation but not through [Ms Arroyo]."

No regrets

Reacting to Aquino's statement, House Deputy Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano said: "For our future, we continue to fight, but regrets are for the past. We must make sure we do what is right now so we don't regret what we did today when tomorrow comes."

THE COLORS HAVE CHANGED. More than four years after supporting Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's rise to power, former President Cora:on Aquino admitted to supporters she had made a mistake. ALBERT DIAZ CRUZ

Cayetano said he did not regret taking part in the Edsa II rallies, but "I regret not doing more to make sure GMA did not become the monster she said she was fighting."

He added: "Like Marcos, GMA did not become a tyrant overnight. What we should all regret is not Edsa I and II but the failed governance and missed opportunities. We expected much from GMA and expected her to raise the level of professionalism and good governance in the country.

Fairness urged

"Instead, her administration is worse than the Estrada administration."

Administration lawmakers called on Aquino to be fair in judging Ms Arroyo.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles said even Aquino "experienced losing some of her supporters and followers who became disenchanted with her administration and position on the current political crisis."

Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco, spokesperson of Estrada's Pwersa ng Masa party for Metro Manila, said Aquino's and Villanueva's statements were "a way of saying that Edsa II was a mistake and the rule of law was not followed."

Tiangco said Estrada's supporters had always maintained that the removal of the former President was "unconstitutional."

"As a consequence of their action, they must make amends and correct the injustice they had committed against Estrada and the Filipino people," he said. *With reports from Edson Tandoc Jr. and Nancy C. Carvajal*

Lurking dangers for GMA, POC

BARE EYE

Reynaldo Trinidad

THERE WAS NO storm warning.

No gush of positive destruction.

No dramatic downcasting to weigh, either.

No sub warning, no hint of fatal timing.

In short, the Thais are not joining to spoil the Philippines' South east Asian Games party.

At least, they did not seem they would.

No threat, no clear description of intent.

* * *

But listen, please.

If top Filipino sports officials had failed to see through Thailand's ruse to send its Class A boxing team to the **Manila SEA Games next month, something's wrong with their alarm instruments.**

We did not even have to read between the lines.

Thailand, as clearly stated, is coming on strong to dethrone the SEA Games boxing crown.

So, if their finest amateur boxers are showing up here next month, can their best athletes in other disciplines be far behind?

* * *

It's like this. A group of Thai sports officials, headed by Thai No. 2 in the Thailand Olympic Committee, came over for a look see of the venues for the SEA Games, set to fire off here Nov. 27.

After getting the Manila preparations the thumbs up, the Thai group also made a very generous pronouncement.

They said NP should not find it hard to finally bag the Games overall title, which the country had missed by two gold medals in 1991.

But listen again: The Thais also did not state they would be aiming the overall title to the Philippines as a silver platter.

* * *

OK, the visitors from Bangkok had explained why they could not send their best players.

Thailand was also preparing for an international indoor meet which they would be hosting close to the SEA Games.

This announcement should not however make our sports legends bedreamy.

In the first place, why did Thailand make that announcement? Why did it suddenly decide to field in its best heroes, including their Asian Olympic gold medalist and a reigning World Cup titlist?

Well, the Thais may not be actually trying to mislead our sports bosses.

But their latest move seems only one thing: Given the chance, they would go for the overall title.

* * *

Sorry folks. But, based on [illegible] Games, there's a genuine chance of the opening for a spectacular surge being available to the Thais.

Mike Ilesic, national training director, was perfectly right when he stressed our athletes have failed to truly exploit the availability of local venues.

Most of those playing fields, always [illegible] competitors should've honed their skills ahead of Asian neighbors, were in fact still in the process of completion at press time.

Still, there's no need to panic.

Thailand's latest move cannot count as a veiled threat.

No storm warning, then.

However, Filipino sports officials should at least take note of the lurking dangers.

Let's prove they don't play it blind like the powers-that-say residents of Malacañang, who has refused to recognize the gusts of wrath, the storm of anger and hunger, the thunder of leaders, bleeding peasant vote, soon set to explode like a volcano right on her doorstep.

Bondad big in HK

HONG KONG...FRANCES BONDAD started sweet revenge on Thai hero **Pavarit Chuthichai** and **Wannasing Phuthiao yesterday, toiling the 2265 Jockey Club Kau Sai Chau Asian Golf Monthly International Amateur** open yesterday by six strokes with a closing 3-under-par 72 at the **Kau Sai Chau Public Golf Club** course here.

Bondad, who started the final round five shots ahead of local lass Dora Mok, pulled away from the pack with a sizzling 9-under 30 in the front nine of the par-72 layout.

She finished the two-day at 217 after rallies rounds of 72 and 73.

That was six shots ahead of Chutichai, who outscrunched Bondad in the final round of the Hong Kong Amateur Ladies Open two weeks ago.

The RP titist's squad failed to match Bondad's feat as Michael Bibat settled for thirtyfive with a 222 after a 74. Jay Bajenia secured up 80th with a 76 for 228 and Team on Asiatic Industrial home with set 89 for a 241.

It was an inspiring win for the 17-year-old Bondad, the former RP Ladies Open winner who, with Ulanned and reigning RP Ladies champion Jayvee Agoja, will lead the Philippines' bid to run south's Southeast Asian Games.

Chutichai fired a 71 and took runner-up honors with a 223, while Phuthiao settled for third [81-202].

Bondad's star here, along with Mia Nuno and Crystal Sapord and the nurse squad, is sponsored by golf patron Delogue Ramos Jr. Picos finished eighth [84-223] and Bajenia ninth [85-224].

No stopping Daniels as Air 21 wins

Viewpage A21

was held to two points in the fourth quarter after outscoring 22 in the first three periods.

The scores:

First Game

ABET 119—Daniels III, 6, Bolick 12, Pinaan 14, Fermin 14, Gamboa 10, Sabido 6, Suero 7, Sarmiento 2, Arboleda 5, De Guzman 2, Dacuyt, Jr., Ilustre 5.

AIR 21 121—Ilustre III, Saneza 24, Aquino 18, Webb 16, Orozco 3, Cuab 5, Calaguio 13, Dabing 3, Dio, Rivera 3, Sibayan 9, Ilustre 2.

Quarters: 17-25, 53-61, 89-92, 119-121.

Second Game

PETRON 119—Gonzalez III, Altamirano 15, Rosario 11, Dimayuga 8, Pascua 8, Arnaiz IV 6, Taganas 4, Yongco 2, Lucas 2, Wenphoh 9, Baguio 6.

SAN MIGUEL 78—Hill 30, Jorge 14, Fontanilla 12, Bunsow 4, Montalbo 8, Calaguio 9, Nocum 4, Alfonso 2, Nitu 2, Fontanilla 4, Olanday.

Quarters: 30-25, 59-50, 93-66, 78-119.

Food program serves up fresh ...

From page A1

and other vitamin-enriched foods.

The program, an offshoot of the Church-led 22-minute fund drive "Pondo ng Pinoy," aims to ease children's plight in Metro Manila from malnutrition.

It is called Ating-Ani, a name that combines the Filipino words Ating (Eating table) and ating ani (hope).

"Some malnourished children are the future of our country. They are our hope, our future leaders," Pondo ng Pinoy coordinator and Caritas Manila director Fr. Anton Pascual said yesterday. "We have to save them."

Wasting children

Ating-Ani aims to feed about 50,000 children of Metro Manila below 9 years old. The target is to feed 5,000 children in each of the 10 dioceses under the Pondo ng Pinoy.

Since it was launched in July, Ating-Ani has served almost 3,000 children. It aims to complete its mission by June 2016.

Manila Archbishop Cardinal Rosales and business chair Manuel Prieto are the chairs of Ating-Ani.

A study has shown that the metropolis has some 200,000 "wasting" children—or children who do not eat for long periods. The program hopes to reach at least 25 percent of them.

Under the feeding program, children beneficiaries, or those recommended by such parish, are served a high-protein meal enriched with vitamins and minerals once a day. They receive food, for six months.

The meal could be in the form of hot champorado or arroz caldo or other recipes.

The cost is P7.50 per meal. Feeding the target 50,000 children for six months will cost P45 million.

Ating-Ani, through the Pondo ng Pinoy, has generated about P8 million in funds so far, Pascual said.

The program also offers guidance on family planning, values formation and nutrition education to parents, most of whom—because of poverty—have been feeding their children noodles, which lack the nutrients needed for proper development.

The Pondo ng Pinoy or Pdf is the Church's answer to the worsening poverty in the country. Pascual said during a pastoral assembly of the archdiocese in Mendiola during City on Friday.

The PnP was launched in June 2004 as a consortium foundation supported by 25 corporate dioceses to contribute to the 13 dioceses covered by the archdiocese of Manila.

Scholarships, too

In June 16 months, the fund drive has raised P52 million, Pascual said.

"That is probably the fastest organization to raise an amount this big by just soliciting votes," he added.

Aside from supporting Ating-Ani, the PnP offers microfinance programs and scholarships to poor communities in Metro Manila and in provinces as the party in Dalaman.

Pascual said poverty was the root cause of the growing confusion and social disorder affecting the country, eroding hope among the people.

More powerful than truth?

He challenged political leaders to uphold a value more powerful than the "truth" which they claim to seek in the current political turmoil.

"That is love," Pascual said.

"If they love our country, they would set aside differences and join consensus on improving our condition," he said.

He said that instead of advancing political and personal interests, "we should all focus our attention on the No. 1 social problem in our country, which is poverty."

Part of the bleak story of the results that fell from the web must-vote, the PnP was inspired by Pandong Batangas, which Rosales had on upbeat by new archbishop at Ipa City, Batangas. The project collected P12 million in three years.

Pink ribbon links survivors

From page A1

their composure slipped and some of their defenses crumbled when they saw that their loved ones seemed to be suffering more than they were.

In the end, both women prepared by relatives for fighting a common enemy—realized that they must overcome breast cancer not only for themselves but also for those they loved and lost.

Survivors

Today Ating and Feliciano have recovered from the malignant growths in their chests and proudly call themselves survivors. The two women are linked by the Global Convention Kilusan, a campaign against breast cancer launched by Asian Cosmetics Inc. to raise 30 centavos.

In Makati City yesterday, Ating turned over the Global Convention Kilusan to Feliciano, who will represent the Philippines in New York, where the next first created. The eldest, Jesse, will become executive worldwide, as it is passed on from one survivor to the next, according to organizers.

In mid-2002, Ating was preparing for a week-related trip to Japan as a manager of a retailing firm based in Beijing when a routine medical exam discovered a tumor in her breast.

She shrugged it off, and asked the doctor what needed to be done, and how long it would take. Later she told her husband and her 28-year-old son that she would have a checkup when she came back from her trip.

Homemade dish

But her family would not hear it, she told the hesitant one doctor on Saturday. "They insisted that I should have the eye removed before I left," Ating said.

Over the next several days, the tumor doubled in size in the lump and by the treatment of her lungs. I was, she said, "My husband's last words when he left for Beijing."

One day, she saw another patient who shared the hospital room eating a homemade dish that looked very delicious. When her husband learned she had a craving for the dish, he spent eight hours scouring Beijing to look for it in stores and restaurants.

"He never found one, so he asked a restaurant to make the same dish just for me and ended up paying more," Ating said.

Although her attitude over her condition but dread on being reconstructed, she said it was her family that sustained her for her.

Husband and son cry

It was during her operation that she saw her husband, a man characterized by his fine cries in their decades-long marriage, she said. It was also the first time she saw her son's eyes wet with tears, she said.

The effort of her illness on her family was such that she resolved to conquer it once and for all. "I think I didn't have a right to die," she said.

Many Christians in the world do not tell their families they have cancer and choose to suffer in silence, Ating said.

She could never understand why. "It's not the woman's fault if they get cancer," she said.

She said she was now campaigning to educate Chinese women about breast cancer to prevent the disease. "I should use my experience to educate them not only for their own sake but also for their families."

The two pair, Feliciano and her family was instrumental in helping her cope with breast cancer.

Chemotherapy

In mid-2000, she felt a lump in her left breast while in the shower. When she went to the hospital, the doctor told her it was a malignant cyst. She had to undergo chemotherapy.

Her initial reaction was to take about it she said. "I told my husband, Raquel, of the pregnancies for long and never told cancer only for the third."

Later, a nurse told her that other patients who had met her mother were surprised by how she had handled the news.

But when Feliciano, who was then working for a package delivery company, saw that her family was hurting, she began to pray that her ordeal would soon end.

She never cried during the initial checkup but Feliciano's daughter was a different story altogether, she said.

"The pain is unbearable. It's like you're down with the flu multiplied several times. I was so weak. I kept vomiting. The interval for each session was three weeks. Each time I was beginning to recover, the next session would begin," she said.

As she lay bedridden in their house between sessions, her father never came to visit because, as she learned later, he could not bear to see her in such a state.

Fashion statement

She said her husband was with her all the time and stayed with her through the difficult phases of her treatment—puffiness, and impairment and they felt so helpless and could only look away every time she vomited.

When she saw the changes of her long hair were falling off, she had her head shaved completely. Believing that it was no supportive family will, her going bald was a big fashion statement, she said.

Mother to a 24-year-old daughter and grandmother to a year-old girl, Feliciano is now working for a women's cancer monitoring company in her spare time, she is a volunteer at the Philippine General Hospital, where she counsels breast cancer victims.

She does not initially tell the patients that she is a cancer survivor, but when they learn about it, "they look at me, as though they can't believe it," she said.

Sometimes, when she is in church and sees a woman with a bandana around her head, Feliciano knows intuitively that she is undergoing chemotherapy. She often approaches the cancer patient, and imparts words of support and advice, she said.

It gives patients hope that, like her, they too, can fight breast cancer and defeat it, she said.

With fellow survivors, Feliciano led cancer awareness on a month around Makati's business district early yesterday morning for the fund-raiser, the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer.

"Right now, one Filipina dies of breast cancer every two hours ... Breast cancer does not discriminate against. If we can encourage women to do breast self-examination, then probably there would be early detection and eventually, we can save lives," Avon Philippines Inc. Country Manager Jesse Cuenco-Gonzalez-manager.

Science has yet to find a cure for breast cancer.

The 1,000-strong contingent of cancer awareness advocates gathered from corporate employees and survivors, and students from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. Some shirts and pants to have and boulder cloth, and wore something pink—the cancer crusader's official color.

From 6 to 8 a.m. in the about 7:30 a.m., they marched down Makati Avenue, Ayala Avenue, through the intersecting Gil Puyat Avenue, then back to Makati Avenue's Gabriela Silang Carpark where the walk had started.

Pink insignia

Participants paid a P50 registration fee, for which they got a "walk certificate" and a wristband bearing the Avon breast cancer campaign's pink insignia.

An international cosmetics company's Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer campaign, yesterday's fun walk was the third in the country this year for Avon Cosmetics Inc., having brought the campaign to the cities of Cebu and Davao.

The company has helped to raise the amount in all three cities to P20 million for hospitals, including Cebu's Velayne Avenue Memorial Medical Center, the Davao Medical Center and the Philippine General Hospital-Breast Care Center in Manila.

Quinge said the company would match the P500,000 to P1 million the three fun walks had raised, and would donate it to the hospitals for purchase of medical equipment for breast cancer detection, including mammography machines.

Thankful

"I'm very thankful that there's this kind of activity for women because it helps raise awareness for women to take care of themselves ... It's a big thing for women to know about the risk of having cancer," Velasquez said.

In Zamboanga City, at least 3,000 women, men and children held a three-kilometer dubbed as "Walk for Life" on Friday in an effort to boost cancer awareness.

"It is definitely a pre-mid-month, but not a political one. We are protesting against a killer that is cancer," city Mayor Celso L. Lobregat said.

At least 104 people have died of cancer in the city this year alone, although it is only second in the list of five top killer diseases in the city officials said people should be aware of causes and symptoms.

"We need to intensify the awareness campaign," Teresita de la Cruz, spokesperson of the Health Office, said.

Vice Mayor Maria Isabel Climaco said residents should rally behind the government's campaign against all forms of cancer because "nationwide, the No. 1 killer among women is breast cancer." With a report from Julli Aquilo, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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Prizes at stake:
[illegible]

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FATIMA MEDICAL CENTER

Blind spaniel joins fun walk

By Tarra V. Quismundo

SHE WOULD MISS STEPS, BUMP INTO strangers, and fall on the sidewalks, but no obstacle could discourage this blind canine from walking for a cause.

One on a leash for the first time in months, Maya, a 5-year-old cocker spaniel, was among thousands who joined yesterday's fun walk to raise awareness on breast cancer.

"We stayed here in the back (of the stands) because she's getting disoriented for all the noise, all the people. This is the first time for her to walk outside since the hospital stint," said Maya's owner, Ms. Rochelle Marie Antonio.

Blood-tinted Maya, a champion show dog who had once several canine "pageants," lost her sight in July to glaucoma, a progressive ailment that irreversibly snatched away her vision.

Despite the dog's condition, Antonio, a marketing officer of Globe Telecom Inc., decided to take Maya on the fun walk as a show of support for a friend and colleague, Genevieve Tuanpo, who is currently battling breast cancer.

"She needs all the support she can get because it's good to know that your boss (friends) with you when you're sick," Antonio said.

Antonio says prepared for the 5-km walk with a full workout for the canine: a brisk hill-climb with tickets on the Manila drinking convenience, a bag of dog food and, of course, eye drops.

But as the pooch easily got tired and was still adjusting to her blindness, Antonio took her pet on a detour.

Instead of going all the way around Gil Puyat Avenue from Ayala Avenue, Antonio gave Maya a water break at the Glorietta Square Monument on the corner of Ayala Avenue and Paseo de Roxas, as her blind canine had a hard time walking when they walked in a leisurely pace through lines in front to meet the parade at the intersection of Makati Avenue, the walk's turnaround.

METRO
Editor: Emer G. Dizon-Gil

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SUPERLOTTO 6/49 18 15 23 27 39 45 ₱8,000,000.00

Big rally vs MMDA today

By Clarissa S. Batino

DRIVERS OF A VOLLEY BY transport groups said they were expecting more than 5,000 drivers and operators of public utility vehicles to join today's demonstration before the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority offices in Guadalupe, Makati.

"Based on the commitments we have, about 5,000 drivers, conductors and operators will join the rally," Elgar Mendoza, lawyer and spokesperson of the group said.

Of the listed events, more than 2,000 are from four groups most affected by MMDA's Metropolitan Traffic Ticketing and the No Contact Apprehension system.

These two schemes, which aim to simplify the apprehension process, are being studied by the courts. Pending a decision, the MMDA has continued implementing them.

While there is no transport strike, Mendoza said the public utility vehicles would be playing their routes today especially along Edsa.

Closure of Rodriguez dump set

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MONEY.

The Rodriguez, Rizal, government said it would suspend operations at the Montalban Solid Waste Disposal Facility on Wednesday over delays on its request for a 20-percent increase for the use of the dump.

"The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority had not yet decided on our request. We are pushing through with the closure," Rodriguez Mayor Nilo Geurzo said yesterday.

Geurzo said the dump's private operator want the current ₱600 per ton tipping fee to be raised to ₱800, saying that other sanitary dumps are getting more.

The mayor said they were just asking for a "fair treatment."

The Rodriguez dump takes in garbage from 16 cities and municipalities in the metropolis.

Documents provided by Geurzo showed that the private contractor of the controlled dump in Quezon City charges ₱1,400 per ton of garbage.

Of the 6000 per ton fee for the use of the Rodriguez facility, the private contractor of the Montalban facility gets ₱600 while the local government gets ₱1,000.

In his letter to the MMDA, Geurzo also complained of the constant delay in payments.

"The municipality finds it extremely difficult to meet our obligations if we will always experience (delayed payments)," he said in a letter to MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando on Oct. 17.

"Your failure to address our immediate concerns will force us to temporarily close the (facility) the moment possible time," Geurzo added.

The MMDA allegedly still owes the Rodriguez government ₱381 million.

"We can reconsider our decision to close the facility if the MMDA will help us sustain our operations," Geurzo said in an earlier interview.

In a statement, the local government warned that the closure of the facility could bring another garbage crisis in the metropolis.

The Pasmas and Tanay controlled dumpsites servicing only a few areas in Metro Manila.

But these are set to close by the end of the year in compliance with the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act.

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Mystery donor funds MRT tickets

JOHN WHILE THE CONTROVERSY of who handed a lobby contract to the US rages, another monetary donation is set to be made to the Arroyo government.

The mystery donor has offered to give 500,000 Metro Rail Transit 3 tickets pampered with the photo of President Macapagal-Arroyo, a transport official said.

But in on top of the 800,000 new passes that the railway agency earlier commissioned, according to Transport Undersecretary Cesilig Matsunaling.

A lack of tickets has been hounding MRT 3 for the past few months.

Matsunaling said 500,000 tickets will be arriving in the coming weeks, courtesy of a donor he said he did not know.

MRT 3 general manager Roberto Lastimoso said he also did not know who was donating the tickets except that it was a "multinational group."

The payment order for 800,000 tickets is costing the government ₱10 million. Clarissa S. Batino

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Call center offers 3,000 jobs

SOME 3,000 JOBS ARE EXPECTED TO BE created with the inauguration today of the call center offices of Whitehouse Solutions in Mandaluyong City.

President Macapagal-Arroyo will lead the inauguration at the Robinson's Cyberspace Tower 1 on Pioneer Street at 9 a.m.

The call center business is being pushed by government to create jobs locally.

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Basketball isn't the only thing in SEAG

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THERE IS NO question that basketball is the PI-nation's No. 1 sport, true sports officials should be reminded that basketball is not the only thing in the running Southeast Asian Games. In hosting this year's 23rd SEA Games, we should not focus on the other 36-plus sports in our quest for the overall championship.

"Our SEA Games reborn must not run solely in basketball," said Dr. Tong Kiat, during a recent dialogue with members of the Athletes and Coaches Association of the Philippines. "We must also think of our respective sports and your collective efforts in the quest for the SEAG overall crown."

Admitting he once committed the mistake of urging "a SEA Games without the basketball," Tong Kiat pointed out in his Cojuangco-like way that "basketball is the mainstay of the Asiad, stressed he was admonished by the POC president (Jose Cojuangco) and told not to ignore the contributions of the other athletes to other sports, including the tennis and field and others.

"When I realized my mistake, I apologized to Mr. Cojuangco," said Dr. Tong Kiat, the former national women's coach, (in coming out with an open letter supposedly asking Cojuangco to reinstate the BAP as the national association for basketball. Many readers and athletes likewise scolded Crisostomo allegedly using the cause of the association without their knowledge.

"He (Crisostomo) acted on his own and did not consult the association before he came out with his open letter," lamented Asop secretary Hagibar Ong. Crisostomo is a staunch ally of BAP secretary general Graham Litz, who is reportedly behind the hoop appeal.

Though, Cojuangco and POC chairman Robert Aventajado are doing everything we find a way to mediate the issue and take part in the basketball event, defending the men's cage title should not be the only thing in the minds of Filipinos.

On this score, many are calling on BAP president Joey Lina to make the supreme sacrifice by accepting the decision of the 10 members of the POC general assembly to expel the BAP from the local Olympic body.

The BAP was expelled for two valid reasons. The POC assembly was offended by the arrogance of BAP officials and by their lack of direction and show of disrespect to the POC. After the BAP was neglected in order to promote motivated-up basketball in recent years, the BAP should not complain when the assembly voted for its ouster. It cannot dictate on the presidents of the 33 national sports associations who voted for the ouster.

The ball is now in Lina's hands. A former senator and local government secretary, Lina can win the nation's respect and admiration by informing International Basketball Federation (Fiba) secretary general Patrick Baumann that the BAP is no longer recognized by the POC as the sole and valid member for basketball in the Philippines. He name could very well be remembered by this generation and the generation to come by making this patriotic gesture instead of saying that the POC can save the basketball event in the SEA Games by sympathetically (he chuckles) saying "Sorry."

There are rules to sports that must be followed to ensure fairness, honesty and sportsmanship. Decisions of officials duly authorized to execute them must, in this case, the POC assembly must also be respected. Otherwise, there will be confusion, or what is happening now.

Birthday greetings to Buffy Cuyugan, executive of Photokina Marketing Corp. who is my co-celebrant today.

Luzon 2nd as Taiwan cycling tour kicks off

BERNARD LUZON OVERCAME teammates with Saturday to place a strong second at the end of the Tour de Lu Tour de Rwalan in Taiwan.

Overall rally into 89 Pagcor Cadiz riders in the two-day event, Luzon took surprising bronze behind Ireland's Paul Griffin of the Giant Asia Racing Team to the 166 kilogrind.

But Luzon, who finished Chief in the 2004 Tour Filipinas, acknowledged the support of his fellow Swiss Eriksen Albert Petersen, who finished 12th.

Griffin scored 11 points in the stage, two ahead of Luzon and his others race points in front of David Estes-of-Hong Kong.

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Aqua Apollonians Swim ruled the 20-39 division in 1:19.19; Abet Abra shot the 40-44 class (1:21.59), and Alvin Mangaya topped the 45-49 event (1:32.34).

The event was held in cooperation with Manila Mahong Village Association and sponsored by Speedo, Gatorade, Powerflex Nike, Dentil, Jabra, Stronghold Insurance and Asian Hospital.

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TOSHIBA

OFW remittances seen up 20%

$10B expected by yearend, $11.3B in '06

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS expects bank remittances from overseas Filipino workers to surge to a new high of $10.5 billion by year's end or 20 percent better than the inflows in 2004.

Migrant workers are seen to pump in at least $11.3 billion through the banking channel next year—10 percent higher than the projected contributions for 2006, latest BSP forecasts showed.

Throughout the years, the Philippines has been relying on huge remittances from OFWs to boost domestic consumer demand.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. on Friday said the strong inflows from overseas would perk up the domestic economy and compensate for the slack in export growth.

It was earlier reported that the government was expecting a lower export growth of 6 percent for this year and 8 percent next year versus the two-year target of 10 percent.

The more bearish outlook for exports factored in the sluggish demand for electronics, which accounted for 60 percent of total export receipts as the first year.

With that, the country was expected to earn only $46.5 billion from exports.

(ON REMITTANCES, B2)

GREEN FIELDS OF BACOLOD. A farmer carrying a bamboo basket walks past a sugar cane field in Barangay Banga-Banga. The village of Bacolod-Kabankalan area, primary source of sugar cane in northern Luzon. The cane juice is fermented by bacteria and molds, and fermented to produce vinegar and a local wine called tuba. AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE

Bank heir eludes P400-M SC order B1
BDO willing to pay more for EPCIB B1

Gov't hikes inflation forecasts

THE GOVERNMENT IS REACting for a higher inflation ceilings over the next two years due to soaring oil prices and growing money supply that push up consumer spending.

The Inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee sees the annual inflation rate overshooting government targets to 6-8.5 percent in 2006, and 4-6 percent in 2007, latest official forecasts showed.

The government's original target was to keep inflation within 4-5 percent for 2006, and 3-4 percent for 2007.

But Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. on Friday said that the 2007 inflation target range may be adjusted upwards to 4-5 percent in line with the recent assessment on consumer prices, money supply and economic output.

"It's the direction, but it's not final," Tetangco said.

The BSP governor said the

(CONT'D ON B2)

Lower earnings seen

POLITICAL MOVES AND MEDIOCRE RESULTS either last night or in 2006 are expected to dictate investors this week, AB Capital Securities said in a weekly report.

"Investments are turning negative as global growth forecasts are being cut while interest rates are rising," AB Capital Securities wrote. "Add to this, the country's ever volatile political environment, is causing foreign investors off. Although investors are not pushing the panic button yet, it makes sense to tighten up

(INVESTING, B3)

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Carlito V. Bautista

A FEW YEARS AGO, I ARD A COLLEAGUE IN the Abreno Ecosystem Department did (courtesy of his new farmers around the country, and found that many of them had seen declining yields per hectare over time. The only logical explanation seemed to be that the quality of the land they were planting to (or year after year was deteriorating through time. Many were getting less than 50 cavans of palay per hectare, or less than half of what had been consistently achieved in the 1960s with the Manapaw-99 program.

Business commonly described the situation to as an "unplanned any basis" like soil is tired or exhausted). It's an interesting way of putting it, and I defer to the wisdom of people who have spent the good part of their lives working on a field to say things like that. They must know what they are talking about.

Magsaysay's DOFS

Two weekends ago, I found myself in the town of Magsaysay in Davao del Sur, attending a mini-conference on the theme of sustainable agriculture. Dante Delos Angeles called the Davao Del Organic Farming System or DOFS. I saw it's unique in I've heard of numerous NGOs pushing organic farming and sustainable agriculture. But this was the first time I was seeing a local government unit (LGU) actually implementing and propagating the concept.

After two presentations by enterprising farm sets (but the municipal government's NGO partners, the Don Bosco Center, stressed that it was the LGU that sought them out, not the other way around), which was the more unusual experience. I know of many similar NGO-promoting sustainable agriculture who are currently tolerated, even harassed, by the LGU or the Department of Agriculture (DA), but typically do not receive any active government assistance. Jerry Pentecost of the Don Bosco Center describes their relationship with other LGUs as "peaceful coexistence" at best. As such, these initiatives remain limited in scope and reach. Indeed, even though a number of farm faces enjoyed tremendous and unmistakable positive achievements.

Cheap fertilizer

DOFS, which the Magsaysay LGU claims to have 1,500 farmers adopters, is covering 122 hectares so far, promotes a self-sustaining farming system where the farm family combines production of rice, fruits, and vegetables with raising livestock like goats and cattle. No chemical fertilizer, pesticides or herbicides are used. Soil bed filtration is provided by silt collected in irrigation ditches, mulch of weeds or farm trees of animal manure and compost from organic solid waste.

Even if we'd DOFS farmers swear that their yields have increased over time, even though the initial impact of the shift may be to slightly reduce yield—though this does not necessarily always happen. By the third crop, they typically match or exceed what they used to obtain with chemical fertilizer, i.e. once the soil is fully rejuvenated. On the other hand, those farmers using chemical fertilizer find that they have to keep raising fertilizer application year after year to maintain yield levels they have been accustomed to. With rapidly rising fertilizer prices, this is clearly an unsustainable situation.

Low input, high returns

In rented parts, crops are sprayed with a concoction of—guess what?—water and honey. DOFS farmers all attest to their superior effectiveness compared to chemical pesticides, not to mention the avoidance of toxic chemicals. A recent pest infestation reportedly led to massive door damage to conventionally grown crops. But the crops sprayed with the milk factory mixture of water and honey proved more resistant. Whereas the farmer were reportedly lucky to salvage 20-30 cavans per hectare, the DOFS farms still managed 60-70 cavans. It was explained to me that milk and honey were part of a biological control system that attracts predators who feed on the pests infesting the plants.

The clear advantage of DOFS over the usual farming system lies in the cash costs involved, apart if one factors in premium organically grown rice fetches in the market. With very little cash costs required, DOFS gives the farmer a significantly higher net income per hectare (P24,434 as against P16,866), even under the slightly diminished yield than initially results from the shift. Moreover, it makes it unnecessary for farmers to borrow working capital, ending their dependency on trader-lenders who have take advantage by paying lower prices for the cash-strapped harvest. Early DOFS adopter Alfeg Lorna Mirasol said her husband Mang Cholo Abad had already paid off their debts since they practiced DOFS. She will soon finish paying off previously incurred loans. DOFS has, in effect, liberated them from bondage to their creditors.

Vested interests?

Bhoja Tawin and DOFS project manager Carlos Ortiz tell me their one of their most formidable early challenges had been lack of support from the DA, whose current pet program on promoting hybrid seeds is seen by practitioners to be both not be sustainable by DOFS. And yet farmers I met at the DOFS farms seemed to be interested using the government's imported hybrid rice seeds, while having had to spend more on inputs. DOFS made more economic sense for them. One farmer expressed suspicion that hybrid rice is being pushed because rice traders might be making money from seed procurement. True or not, DOFS does rice much more than just to allow suppose from DA. Magsaysay is showing that sustainable agriculture works—and could improve whole people's lives while sustaining our environment. Truly win-win situation.

Comments are welcome at cbautista@starnet.ph.

Gov't urged to respect sanctity of contracts

By Abigail L. Ho

MANILA, Philippines—On the horizon is the renegotiation of the contracts of independent power producers, and one of them—Manila Electric Co.—has urged the government to respect the sanctity of contracts and focus on the development of the market.

"The IPP contracts have been looked at at one time in the past," said James Ang, Meralco Philippines president. "It seems to us that the real focus should begin in the development of the market and on privatization and competition. It's really hoped not that the sanctity of contracts is respected."

Ang's comments did not say how the new round of renegotiations would affect Meralco's future investment plans for the country. He did however say that it would be good to focus on the market as the country's generation sector showed good potential for growth.

According to Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla, the IPP renegotiation should be viewed as a step toward achieving a stable policy and regulatory framework.

He pointed out that RA 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (EPIRA), provided for the review of IPP contracts, when necessary.

And these reviews, not renegotiation, will be held with the approval of everyone concerned, Lotilla said.

Government would not on its own call for a review or renegotiation, he added.

An inter-agency committee (IAC), led by the Department of Finance, was earlier formed to review the country's IPP contracts in a bid to generate savings that would eventually translate to lower rates for consumers.

To date, at least 15 contracts are still considered active.

The National Power Corp. said that it was able to reduce its obligation by more than P6 billion last year after it completed the renegotiation of some IPP contracts.

OFW remittances seen up 20%

Continued on B-3

this year, and $44.1 billion next year as against the projected import bills of $49.3 billion and $51.0 billion, resulting in trade deficits of $5.3 billion and $7.7 billion, respectively.

Tetangco said the National Economic and Development Authority would have to study whether the government would need to downscale economic growth targets for 2006 and 2006 simply on account of weaker export earnings, notwithstanding the sharp increase in remittances from overseas Filipino workers.

Remittances by overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) have been a major support to the country's economy, cushioning the impact of the widening trade deficit.

Earlier, the BSP also expressed a growth in OFW remittances of only 3 percent for this year. This was eventually raised to 10 percent.

But for the first eight months of the year, OFW inflows exceed through banks had already hit $7 billion or 20 percent better than $5.3 billion a year ago, prompting the BSP to again raise its forecast growth to remittances.

Gov't hikes inflation . . .

From page B-1

MEC would meet this week to discuss the government's latest macroeconomic outlook.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said the EMC would no longer change the 2006 and 2006 targets, but would set the path for 2007. Under an inflation-targeting approach to monetary policy, he said the target for any given year would have to be announced more than a year in advance.

Asked about the impact of the VAT implementation of the expanded tax on consumer prices, Guinigundo said the new measure would not have a lasting impact.

For the remainder of this year, he said, the impact would be an increase in the average inflation rate by only 0.11 percentage points, the drive to the target next year.

But by next year when the removal of exemptions would have been implemented and the VAT rate increased from 10 to 12 percent, Guinigundo said the impact would be on increase on the inflation rate by 2 percentage.

However, he said the MEC believed projections would dissipate by 2007 leading to an increase in inflation rate of only 0.2 percent during the year.

Doris C. Bautista

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Jan.-Au

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MANUFACTURING ventures continue to drive investment commitments as the Board of Investments and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority approved 365 projects worth P145.6 billion in the first eight months.

According to data from the Department of Trade and Industry, this year's approved projects were about P1 billion less than the P146.6 billion given the go-ahead in the same period in 2004.

However, investments in the manufacturing sector increased 316 percent to P109.8 billion or 79 percent of the total.

Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said 332 projects in the manufacturing and services sectors would create some 65,975 direct jobs when fully operational, or 98 percent of the total.

24,350 jobs

"The continuous increase in manufacturing projects validates the wisdom of developing (this sector) because they generate the most jobs and they facilitate the transfer of technology into the country," Favila said.

Trade Secretary Elmer C. Hernandez said investments in information technology-based services increased by 10 percent in the first eight months with 67 projects worth P6.35 billion.

The ventures involve software development and business process outsourcing, (BPOs) and are expected to generate up to 24,350 jobs.

Hernandez said local investors continued to be the major source of outlay with commitments of P89.45 billion while foreign investments account for P56.15 billion.

Among foreign sources of investments, Japan is bringing in the biggest amount with P23.2 billion, while Korea has P9.8 billion, the United States with P9.4 billion, and The Netherlands with P7.6 billion.

Approved projects

Among the manufacturing projects, 41 percent is related to coke, refined petroleum and other fuel products; 25 percent to chemicals and chemical products; 9 percent to radio, television and communications equipment; 7 percent to manufacturing non-electronic components; and 18 percent to other products.

In August alone, approved projects reached P11.9 billion or 631 percent more than the P1.63 billion listed in the same period last year.

There were 52 projects registered, which are expected to create 13,283 new jobs at full operation.

Favila said more investments were expected to pour in throughout the rest of the year based on leads and proposals under consideration. These would be in IT, mining, logistics, automotive, and chemicals.

Bayantel to sell remittance unit

By Cielito S. Reino

BAYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS INC., THE telecommunications company of the Lopez group, is selling its remittance business to concentrate on its core operations.

Randy Fullarton, chief consultant of Bayantel, said the company was in talks with buyers interested in the right to operate more than 500 money shops under BON.

BON, or Radio Communications Phils. Inc., is a defunct television company that retained inoperational zone licenses that accept remittances and sell tickets.

However, Bayantel, a subsidiary of Benpres Holdings Corp., is not selling BON's franchise, license or equipment.

"We are selling the operations of the retail store license and the name of that business, but not BON as a company," said Fullarton in an interview after his speech at the Management Association of the Philippines' conference last week.

Selling its money shop business, said Fullarton, will cut Bayantel's projected revenue this year of P6 billion to only about P5.5 billion.

But it would give the company a one-time revenue from the sale.

The reconciliation of the revenue stream is crucial at this stage of Bayantel's recovery, according to Fullarton.

A steep hour reversion business, said Fullarton, would need a lot of cash in the course of the turnaround operations.

"This type of business disperses a lot of cash upfront. It is high growth and high margin but it's not our core business," he said.

Fullarton said BON money shops were among the biggest in the country in terms of volume and reach.

It is the top agent of Western Union, he said.

Once BON is sold, Bayantel will concentrate on further growing its telecom business.

He said the third quarter revenue was "almost as good as second quarter," mostly on the strength of the high-speed Internet business.

So far, Fullarton said 65 percent of Bayantel's installed capacity in the fixed-line business has been utilized.

Bayantel said it would take at least five more years before the company reaches turnover business operations and starts to profit.

The Lopez phone company has been in the red for years.

For the meantime, the Benpres phone unit has to be content with continued growth in earnings before income tax, depreciation and amortization.

The company's Ebitda in the first half of the year totalled P1.2 billion, 29 percent higher than P1.06 billion the previous year.

Fullarton said Ebitda growth would likely average between 15 and 20 percent starting this year, down from a growth of 50 percent in 2004.

The Ebitda reflects the company's capacity to settle its debt and finance operations.

Bayantel has 2,000,000 fixed-line connects within its service area in the whole of Metro Manila and key provinces. It also operates a major telecom backbone nationwide.

Pancake House to raise $4M for Teriyaki Boy

By Elizabeth L. Ratcliffe

PANCAKE HOUSE INC. WILL ISSUE THIS year convertible notes to raise the $4 million it needs to buy 30 percent of Japanese restaurant chain Teriyaki Boy Inc.

In a disclosure on Friday to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Pancake House said it has gained board approval to strike an acquisition deal with Teriyaki Boy and Tenka Teriyaki Inc. to buy control of Japanese restaurant brand "Teriyaki Boy," which both companies operate in Metro Manila.

Investors Aurora Southeast Asia Fund, L.L.C. and Planters Bank Venture Capital Corp. for $800 agreed to purchase the five-year convertible notes.

The investors signed an investment agreement on Friday with controlling shareholders Pancake chair Maria Lorena and Pancake House Holdings Inc. The agreement will provide investors with certain restrictions and possibly allow three investors to nominate and elect one qualified representative to the company's board.

Teriyaki Boy serves traditional home-cooked Japanese meals with a modern twist. It was put up in August 2004 and is owned by the Tia family led by Mary Tia.

Teriyaki Boy operates 10 stores in the following locations: Madison Square mall the Promenade Bank in Greenhills; Tomas Morato in Quezon City; Glorietta 3 in Ayala, Fairway Mall in Alabang, SM Bicutan, SM Megamall, Market! Market! in Fort Bonifacio, Eastwood City and Gateway Mall in Cubao.

SB Corp. eyes bigger market

By Christina A. Gagbican

THE OWNED SMALL BUSINESS GUARANtee and Finance Corp. is looking to expand its client base next year by five times to attract and cater lending programs for small- and medium-enterprises.

Increasing lending exposures to priority-based SMEs, providing needed capitalization to start-up companies and qualifying more company suppliers included from the Top 1,000 corporations are part of innovations to be introduced by SB Corp., president and chief operating officer Bernel B. Lagsa said in a briefing Friday.

He said the lower than expected enrollment of loans this year has prompted SB Corp. to re-assess its current portfolio of credit facility for SMEs.

"We are slightly off target and may not be able to hit the P5.6 billion in loans we are aiming for by year-end," Lagsa said. "The fault issues also did not help—with the low lending activities and we would want some key innovative changes [on] you."

Lagsa noted that part of this credit innovations is the new facility for start-up enterprises.

"Start-up entrepreneurs will finally find access to the formal credit with our new facility... the ASEE Financing for Enterprising and Able-Start-ups with Innovative Business Lines—which we will provide 80 percent of the initial capitalization they would need," he said.

A start-up company, Bonbon ng Mommyspot, engaged in the drugstore business, has qualified for this credit facility and has availed itself of some P 1.5 million in loans from SB Corp.

Another new credit line to be extended by SB Corp. is its new set of micro finance products for micro enterprises.

Bank heir eludes ₱400-M SC order

BANCO FILIPINO heir Albert "Bubbit" Aguirre has found a way to escape a Supreme Court order to return his 62-hectare polo farm in Calatagan to the family of Bulacan mayor Ricardo Silverio Sr., the original owner.

As lawyers scamper like scheduled flies to evaluate the latest legal maneuvers by the billionaire polo player to keep his weekend hideaway—neighbors include the Zobels and the Madrigals—from being returned to the Silverios.

Aguirre gained control of the Calatagan farm after fellow polo player Ricardo Silverio Jr., the estranged son of the Bulacan mayor, failed to pay a ₱60-million loan, with the shares of the two companies that own the Calatagan farm, as collateral.

The elder Silverio claimed that his son, who has a history of pharmaceutical problems, had graciously gained control of the two family companies while the old man was overseas and illegally used the companies to borrow money from Aguirre.

Aguirre, sprinting to the gunpoint, had refused a proposal from the elder Silverio to repay his son's indebtedness and, instead, even offered the congressman instead repay ₱60-million just to drop all claims on the Calatagan estate.

In August, the Supreme Court ordered Aguirre to return the Calatagan farm to the two Silverio corporations, but not after recruiting the Bulacan Regional Trial Court for pausing on to the highest courts a judicial query from that enabled Aguirre to hang on to the Calatagan property.

Bulacan Judge Roberto Makalintal on paris recalled the writ of possession he issued on the Silverio companies in May 2000 after being informed that Aguirre had already gained control of the two Silverio companies and that there would be violence in the Calatagan farm should the writ still be enforced.

"Courts must exercise its processes and should not succumb to threat by any party to resort to violence in case of such an enforcement," wrote presiding Justice Antonio Carpio.

(Disclosure: Banco Filipino has filed a ₱5-billion libel suit against Cocktails and top business officers.)

Sandiganbayan's turn to be clipped

AFTER the Supreme Court, it is the Sandiganbayan's turn to be limited.

An incensed Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Teresita Leonardo de Castro last week lifted the 60-day temporary restraining order that she and two fellow justices issued last last month on behalf of Mindanaoling businessman Enrique "Henry" Lanzo to authorizing questions.

It was not clear why Lanzo used a private lawyer, Efren Labadilla, instead of the Office of the Solicitor General, to represent what allegedly was the government position.

The Sandigan TRO, ironically, was issued after the Supreme Court granted in barring Eddie Ongpin to a legal victory from the drug-era Philcomsat institution, led by then chair and now "independent" director Jim "Sonbay" Ansaro, to prevent the government from losing boardroom and management control of the telecom company.

The Philcomsat Group, which had over ₱1.2 billion in

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BDO willing to pay more for EPCIB

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE BANCO DE ORO UNIVERsal Bank Group of retail tycoon Henry Sy Jr. is willing to pay more for the 20 percent stake of Social Security System in Equitable PCI Bank, said BDO chairwoman Teresita Sy in a forum of the Management Association of the Philippines.

"To merge the country's third biggest lender with [Lucio] Tan's to do One Universal Bank, the [Group] needs to accumulate more shares to get a controlling block.

It already bought the 24.76 percent shares in EPCIB held by the Sy family.

"To be realistic, a seller price to BDO has to be higher. We are open [to increasing the offer price] but we don't know what price we will get into," Sy told reporters last week.

EPCIB's shares closed last Friday at P49.50 a share.

"At that time when we offered that, it was about 10 percent higher [than the prevailing market price]. At this point, the market price is higher than the price at which we offered," Sy said.

The SM group earlier teamed to buy the 10-percent stake held by SSC Investments Inc. and the 25 percent owned by the state-owned Social Security System in the bank.

Sy bought the Go family's 24.76 percent stake in EPCIB for P56.50 a share or a sale of P14.2 billion and an offer to Equitable Card Network for P888 million.

Prior to the buyout, the SM group already had a 2.5 percent stake in EPCIB.

Based on BDO's previous offer of P45.00 to SSS, the SM group was ready to pay a total of P11 billion in cash for the other blocks.On Monday, the SSS and PCI billion for the EPCIB stake.

If given the chance to push through with an earlier deal with the SSS that was stalled in court, the SM group was willing to renegotiate the price.

SSS president Corazon dela Paz had said: "If we see an opportunity to make more money for our members, we'll make the determination only after from informed sources as we can move forward."

SSS president Winston Garcia, for his part, earlier said the process "and would consider selling out only if given an offer above its acquisition cost of P8.2 billion.

Negative . . .

and take profits on some investments."

AB Capital also said the market was compressed by worries that the Supreme Court upheld the expanded value added tax law, a key reform measure to plug the country's gaping fiscal deficit.

"Most investors chose to wait until it is actually implemented on Nov. 1," the brokerage said. "Some remain wary as there are moves to delay the implementation of the law to June of next year."

It said the market's decline also showed investors were wary about slowing economic growth with rising inflation and interest rates.

While corporate earnings are expected to be better this year, earnings won't be as strong in 2006 if costs of doing business remain high. —Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Phinma to bid for Tiwi, MakBan

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

HOLDING FIRM PHILIPPINE INVESTMENT Management Inc. of former Finance Secretary Jaime del Rosario Jr. plans to bid for the 700-megawatt Tiwi and MakBan geothermal plants.

Del Rosario, Phinma's president, said he Phinma Group has submitted a letter of intent to the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. for the 275- MW Tiwi Geothermal Power Plant located in Albay and the 425.75-MW MakBan plant in Laguna and Batangas provinces.

Del Rosario said separately in a recent forum by the Management Association of the Philippines that the Phinma Group may look for partners for its planned bid.

"If opportunity comes, we will go into strategic mining," Del Rosario said. "But my think is to consolidate until we show a good story or acquire a good power generating asset, especially if we have a counterpart with us."

Aside from "first thirdliners, the Phinma Group is interested in the 150-MW Philippine geothermal power plants in Oriental Negros, and the 116-MW plants in Bacon-Manito (Bacman) in Sorsogon province.

The Phinma Group has interests in steel, power generation and oil exploration, low-cost housing development and financial services.

BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
Makati City, Metro Manila

NOTICE OF SPECIAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING
November 11, 2005

To The Stockholders:

Pursuant to Article III of the Amended By-Laws of the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), notice is hereby given that the Special Meeting of the Stockholders of BPI will be held at Ballroom F and E, Dusit Hotel Nikko, Ayala Center, Makati City on Friday, November 11, 2005, at 2:00 o'clock in the morning, for the transaction of the following business:

1. Calling of Meeting to Order
2. Certification of Notice
3. Determination and Declaration of Quorum
4. Approval of the Minutes and Ratification of Merger between Philippine Bank and the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) and BPI Family Savings Bank
5. Other Matters

In accordance with Article III of the said By-Laws, the Stock and Transfer Book of BPI will be closed from October 12, 2005 to November 11, 2005. Only Stockholders of record as of October 12, 2005 will be entitled to notice and to attend the meeting.

It will be convenient for you to attend the meeting, should it suit your plans, appoint another person to represent you thereat by means of a proxy which should be submitted to the Office of the Corporate Secretary of BPI, 16th Floor BPI Building, Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, Metro Manila, not later than 2:00 P.M. of October 28, 2005. Validation of proxies shall be held at the same office on November 8, 2005 at 4:00 P.M.

Persons signing as attorneys-in-fact, executors, administrators, guardian, or in any other representative capacity should give his/her entire papers showing such authority.

FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
(Sgd.) CARLOS R. AGCAOILI
Vice President & Corporate Secretary

FRANCISCO I. DEL ROSARIO
ROSARIO (PHILS.) INC.
SEC Form 20-IS (Definitive)

FOR THE REGULAR AND FUTURE YEAR MEETING TO BE HELD ON THE SECOND SPECIAL OF MEMBERS OF SEC. ONE.

Please see the enclosed Proxy Statement for more information.

Please contact [illegible] if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

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Cocktales

From page B1

cash during the first years, but easy in cash assets (heralds to about P721 million with Ayenda, a second cousin of Mike Arroyo, having sifted himself with GMA nominees to stop the majority private owners from retaking control of their company.

Ironically it was the same family/partnership, although through a different division, that in 1999 approved a competition agreement that effectively spelled the end of Makati-ang control over the country's pioneering mobile communication company.

Despite having lost effective majority control, the Soup and some GMA nominees in the Philcomsat Group will managed to retain management and financial control of the telecom group by adroitly exploiting the timeless, money family feuds involving the controlling families of Philcomsat—the Ayalas, the Pelaezes, the Alfonsos and the Enriles.

Money-go-round

• THE soon to be released 2006 Manila Civic Index more akin to its sleep-inducing, higher-end cousin, the Comfy.

• THE Ko Kim Pah have teamed to be-queath to Ateneo de Manila University a portion of their multi-billion windfall from the sale of the family's Equitable PCI bank shares.

Heard through the grapevine

THE NEGATIVE publicity coming out in certain columns opposing the appointment of Presidential Legal Counsel Merceditas Gutierrez to Ombudsman have been traced back to a law firm in the Ortigas business district.

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Low bank lending level threatens growth goals

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. welcomes Nigerian Deputy Governor Ibrahim Shehu, deputy director of the Central Bank of Nigeria during his recent visit to the Philippines. Shehu's visit was aimed at further developing trade relations between Nigeria and the Philippines. With him are other members of the Nigerian delegation.

By Michelle V. Ramos

DESPITE ASSURANCE LENDING by the country's banking industry poses a threat to the government's stimulative push to goal of creating more jobs and achieving economic recovery.

This was the warning raised by investment bank Ibon Sinarra Group, as it noted that the level of bank intermediation in the Philippines fell substantially below the benchmark of an effective banking sector.

Bank intermediation is the ratio of customer loans to deposits, indicating since bank lending from deposits have declining steadily and that currently 53 percent at present, down from 57 percent in 2000.

"The trend toward a steadily declining in the LDR reflects the simple fact that deposits are growing more rapidly than loans. This is bad for economic recovery and job creation in the Philippines," Ibon Sinarra said in a paper on its outlook on the Philippine banking system. It said the LDR of an effective banking sector should be 70 to 80 percent.

Bank lending is an important factor in achieving higher economic growth because it encourages investments and job creation.

Under the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP), economic growth, in terms of gross domestic product, is projected to rise to 7 percent. Growth in the first half of the year was 4.7 percent.

Ibon Sinarra said the growth target would be challenged by the reluctance of banks to increase lending.

Ibon Sinarra noted that the level of NPLs and Repose (real and other properties owned or acquired) in the country was about 10-15 percent of loans.

"This is the reason Philippine banks remain unwilling to—or at least very cautious about—increasing their loans," it said.

The level of NPLs and Repose was attributable to the low-performing profit performance of many banks, which was a problem, it said.

Ibon Sinarra and Philippine banks' assets as a percentage of GDP was among the lowest in the region. It noted that the total assets of Philippine commercial banks was $72 billion in 2004, $10 billion lower than those of Singapore's United Overseas Bank.

The reluctance of banks to lend more makes them reliant on investing and trading securities which, it said, was risky.

"Heavy reliance on securities trading would damage the banks' profitability in 2003, given that the sharp declines in domestic interest rates over the past years were coming to an end," Ibon Sinarra said. It added that increases in the United States and other economies, which influence interest rates locally, are already poised to move upward.

Falling below benchmark of effective banking sector

The oil cartel

I DO NOT MEAN OPEC. I mean the cartel of local oil companies.

On the very same local the oil's ex day, Caltex and Shell raised their prices by 50 centavos per liter. My lawyer tells me the move was clearly illegal and anticompetitive.

The constitution says, "Combinations in restraint of trade are not allowed." This prop up the penal code's section 186, which says, "The penalty of *prision correccional* in its minimum period or a fine from P200 to P6,000, or both, shall be imposed upon . . . any person who shall enter into any contract or agreement or shall take part in any conspiracy or combination of the form of any trust or otherwise, to restrain of trade or commerce or to prevent by artificial means free competition in the market."

"Fruit" as used in the penal code is the American word for the European "cartel." Why a cartel in fruit bad? Because it is a device used by manufacturers, suppliers, or sellers to prevent competition among themselves. As a result, consumer prices are kept artificially high.

The most common cartel involves an agreement on prices, just as Caltex and Shell have done. Of course, Caltex and Shell can claim that they imported their crude oil from the same source and probably even transported it on the same oil tanker. Hence, they can say, their selling prices are the same.

But the cost of the imported crude is only one component of the pump price. The other major component is the operating costs. These costs differ for the same for the two companies and even. If these operating costs are the same, this is the area where they can cooperate to bring down their prices. But when they agree on the price, why should they cut down expenses in the spirit of competition in an open and free market?

The banking cartel runs on a simple rule. The banks agree to charge a minimum rate of interest.

Another common form of cartel involves an agreement to divide the market by geographical area. This is found in the cement industry. A cement plant located in Northern Luzon is given the exclusive right to sell in Batanes. A plant located in the South has the exclusive right to sell in Mindanao.

The age-old reason to justify cartels is the bugaboo that a free and open market leads to ruinous competition. The only answer to avoid are those who are so inefficient that they cannot compete. Why should the consumers subsidize such inefficiency?

Let us take the few monopoly industry for decades, the price of life insurance was dictated by a cartel. Incredibly, it was the only cartel in our long history that had a government license.

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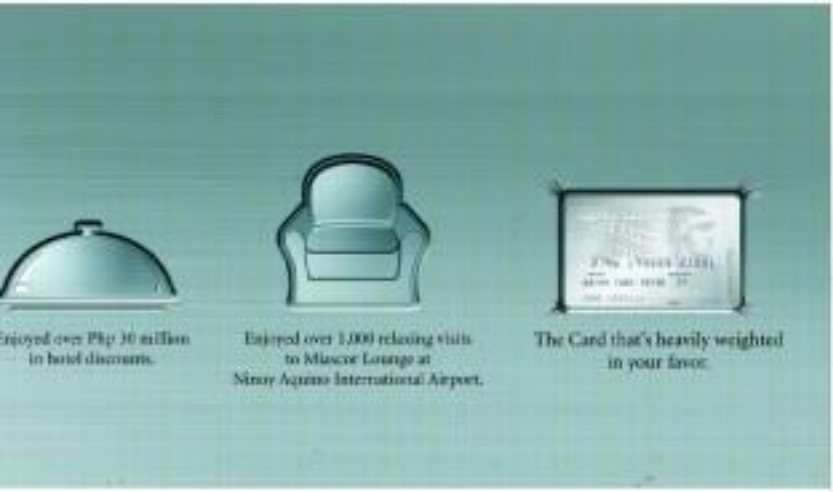
QUESTIONS OF POLICIES
Romeo C. Gonzalez

Napocor studying options to address ₱9B in receivables

By Abigail L. Ho

DEL CALLAR

Ayala renews InterCon contract



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Questions of Policies

Banks' dollar deposits down to $15.7B in Q2

Napocor sales up 45.3%

By Abigail L. Ho

NATIONAL POWER CORP. POSTED A 45.3 percent increase in energy sales revenue to P62.15 billion in the first half from P42.77 billion in the same period last year.

Napocor's sales and services group attributed the revenue growth to the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of the state firm's rate hike petition last April, which resulted in a one adjustment of P0.20 centavos per kilowatt-hour.

The Napocor unit, although posting a 27 percent drop in GPBT, also accounted for the bulk of the first half sales revenue at P38.38 billion, a 44.6-percent jump from last year's P26.68 billion.

The Mindanao grid raked in P7.35 billion, rising 60.1 percent from the P4.59 billion posted the year before. The Visayas grid contributed P6.07 billion, up 20.5 percent from 2004's P5.54 billion.

Napocor's total energy sales in the first half totalled 17,105.42 GWh, down 1 percent from last year's 17,284.64 GWh.

Sales to the Luzon grid dropped 2.7 percent to 11,218.42 GWh in the first semester from 11,530.84 GWh last year.

The slight decline was attributed to lower sales to the Luzon-led Manila Electric Co., which accounted for around 75 percent of the state firm's sales to the Luzon grid and half of total sales nationwide.

In the first six months of the year, Meralco purchased only 7,000.00 GWh from Napocor, down 8.4 percent from the 7,640.62 GWh brought in the same period last year.

FCDU loans slightly up at $4.62B in June

By Doris C. Dumlao

AFTER TWO YEARS OF STRONG growth, foreign currency deposits lodged with Philippine banks fell in the second quarter by $462 million to $15.73 billion, from the first quarter level, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the slowdown in the second quarter was due to withdrawals of maturing placements to time deposits and deposits to meet requirements of banks.

Withdrawals accounted for about 91 percent of the banking system's FCDU deposits.

FCDUs, established in the country's secondary layer of foreign exchange reserves, historically attract more deposits when excess Chinese and Filipino capital flee US dollar in that situation, people and enterprises with dollar revenues choose to park their funds in FCDUs, instead of converting them into pesos right away.

In the first quarter, the strong FCDU build-up was supported by higher foreign investment inflows, export revenues and overseas Filipino worker remittances.

Foreign investments started to slow down in the second quarter, compared to the first quarter performance, given the political uncertainties in the country. Inflows from exports and OFW remittances, however, continued to boost foreign exchange supply.

Based on BSP data, the overall loans to deposit ratio dropped from 30.6 percent in the first quarter to 29.6 percent in the second quarter.

Compared to a year ago, the FCDU deposits improved from $14.35 billion but the loans to deposit ratio was down from 35.67 percent. Analysts say that less funds are being loaned out.

Data showed FCDU loans stood at $4.62 billion at end-June, slightly below the $4.63 billion a quarter ago but lower than $4.9 billion a year ago.

The year-on-year decline in FCDU loans, Tetangco said, was mostly due to net repayments by private sector borrowers.

Outstanding loans to private enterprises at end-June accounted for more than two-thirds of the FCDU portfolio, up from 64 percent a quarter ago.

Exporters and public utilities enterprises constituted enterprises of more than 41 percent.

For the second quarter alone, about 56 percent of FCDU availed were for trade financing requirements and payable for one year. This increased the percentage share of short-term FCDU loan accounts to 34.2 percent from 29 percent at end-March.

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Auction of coal supply deals worth ₱5.3B set

NATIONAL POWER CORP. will bid out P5.3 billion worth of coal contracts to supply the 2006 requirements of two power plants being operated by Mirant Philippines Corp.

The first batch, a spot contract for 600,000 metric tons (MT) of regular coal, will be for the 1,000-megawatt (MW) Sual power plant in Pangasinan. The contract, with an approved budget of P1.8 billion, will be auctioned off on Nov. 21.

Also to be auctioned off on the same day is a three-year contract worth P1.25 billion for the 700-MW Pagbilao power plant in Quezon.

The required shipment for yearly for the three-year period was set at 250,000 MT.

Napocor will also be securing two more coal shipments for the Pagbilao plant, both under spot contracts worth P1.3 billion for each 325,000-MT shipment. One contract is for performance or high quality coal and the other is for blending low-calorie coal.

Bidding for these two contracts is set for on Nov. 22.

In a published invitation to bid, Napocor senior vice president and bids and awards committee chairman Antonio Zamora said open competitive bidding is conducted to fill its need for the contracts, using new electronic procurement facilities.

Only firms with at least 60-percent Filipino ownership will be allowed to bid. Exceptions will be given to foreign firms from countries that grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens. Eligibility documents have to be submitted on or before Nov. 14 for evaluation.

By 2006, Napocor vice president for logistics Juan Carlos Cusahan Jr. said coal-fired power plants would account for 22.3 percent of the total fuel generation mix or 12,307.8 gigawatt-hours (GWh).

This year, coal-fired plants are expected to contribute 21,937 GWh, or 25 percent of gross generation. -Abigail L. Ho

PAP vows support for gov't indigenous energy projects

THE PETROLEUM ASSOCIation of the Philippines (PAP) has assured the government that it would continue supporting the Department of Energy (DOE) in its efforts to develop indigenous energy sources amid the sustained rise in crude oil prices.

In a speech during the organization's anniversary ceremony, PAP chair Alfredo Ramos said PAP members had always been a front runner of the government in its efforts to sustain the upstream petroleum sector.

"The sincere group of companies engaged in the high risk business of petroleum exploration has persisted in searching for oil here in the Philippines even during times of extreme fiscal difficulties," Ramos said. He added that the close collaboration between the government and industry players over the years have attracted the development of the oil exploration industry despite the huge investment required for this undertaking.

Total investments poured into oil exploration in the country had been estimated at over $2 billion. At least two oil and gas fields are currently being developed while other areas are being explored for possible discoveries.

Newest call center opens

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo will officiate today the formal opening of Wellsource Solutions Ltd., which about 2,000 are jobs are needed for its 24-7 operations.

Determined to reach her target of one million jobs over her term ends in 2010, the President has been encouraging the establishment of call centers, hoping to turn the country into the business process outsourcing hub of Asia.

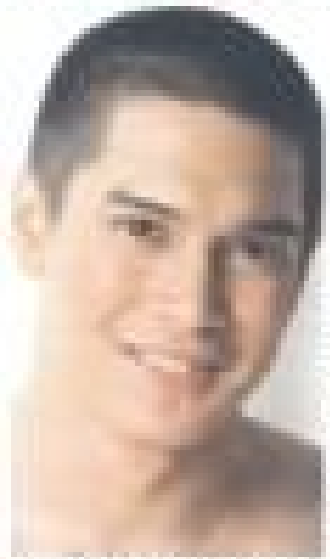
The number-one servicing arm of Wellsource Solutions Ltd. are located at the new Robinsons Cyberpost Tower 1, Hemmer Street, Manalaysang City.

Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., Trade Secretary Peter Favila, Social Welfare of the Unchained Shibey Group of Companies, and other officials of government and the call center industry are expected to be there. Arroyo is today's inauguration.

Jojo Filipus, executive director of Contact Center Association of the Philippines, will also be among the guests from the call center industry. Officials and members of Wellsource Solutions Ltd. by its managing director, Grant Bonnyman, will be on hand to welcome the President.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2005 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE



LUIS Alandy in "Pinoy Fabu 2"

The naked and the playing-dead

By Silas Cadiz

I'M ALL ABOUT MEN 2... Boys Talks Unleashed," the gay peep show masquerading as a musical revue that opened two weekends ago at the Music Museum, 17 young men with rippling abs, sultry shows and sensitive, inward looks revert revenge to the disappoint of female directors. (His clay-brown song "Inside Hunky.")

They are joined by two women who keep their clothes on for the most part, and a piano-bird artist with a body proportion humanoid—not at all displeasing to watch, but to the company of the diagonally-in-stars, a presence she-really means for something else other than physical allure.

Boarding

That area is Rest Dam, followed by many "Hero" bands on the first and the best Angel of the Broadway musical's local staging. Despite a height that barely reaches over 5-ft, Dam is proving to be the brightest cast member of "Pinoy Fabu 2." He must be, because on his puny shoulders rests penny much what goes right in the penultimate production of an area best drama club might have staged in.

Dam was also the best thing in last year's "Pinoy Fabu 1." But this time, his responses a bigger, showing him to be the natural showman's choice for the deep-dyed punchline, the picturesque declaration. Whenever he's onstage, the business of talking about pecker becomes a generally entertaining affair.

What goes horribly wrong,

Turn to page D2

CHRISTIAN Vasquez

Living traditions on tiny Taketomi Island

Japan's tropical islands hold lessons in cultural conservation

TINY TAKETOMI ISLAND (5.5 sq km, 330 inhabitants) is a little-known southwestern island in Okinawa prefecture in Japan's modern Japan. But that is precisely what makes the place so special.

Taketomi rises a mere 60 meters above the sea level at its highest point. It is the tip of an archipelago forming an arc stretching southwest over 1,000 km from Okinawa, toward Taiwan in the little-known Japanese region.

The archipelago was once the fabled Ryukyu Kingdom, a maritime power established in the 15th century which maintained close ties with China through Taiwan, selling its goods with as far as the Philippines, Malacca and Indonesia, a strong force until 1879 when the kingdom was incorporated into Japan.

Castle ruins (Shuri, Nakagusuku, former Nakijin), chateau and royal mausoleums scattered on different islands are some of the Ryukyu legacy recently inscribed on the World Heritage List.

The new town, Iriomote, is one of the islands' World War II souls always well on the islands. The American government took [illegible] possession of the island after the war and administered it from nearby military base in Okinawa, maintaining control until the 1970s when the islands reverted to Japan.

SHIMASUSUKU HIGH coral-stone walls line both sides of the narrow roads topped with stone-shisaky-thatch white sand.

GRADUALLY built of thatch, the typical Taketomi roofs is now covered with more durable terra-cotta tiles.

ONE of the few remaining thatch-roofed houses is facilitated by a line of trees that protects the structure from the seasonal typhoons and strong wind.

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

Surprise

The Japan has regional islands comes as a surprise to those accustomed to the shops of Japan of the cosmic. Zen gardens, cherry blossoms washing each spring to pink and turning leaves red and gold in autumn beneath a backdrop of snow-capped mountain peaks.

Taketomi Jima is a world relevantly, different from the rest of Japan, far removed from the things its distance and vegetation are tropical.

In the landscape, a coral outcrop glut high white limestone and fine white sand, is punctuated by coconut trees and tropical foliage. Pristine blue water teeming with diatoms fills surrounding the island awaits the blinding glare of the scenery.

Shoulder-high walls of coral stone line both sides of narrow roads, dividing the small village into a patchwork of squares and rectangles demarcating private house yards. Just inside their are more like wide lanes, paths with white sand underfoot.

Most of the roads are too narrow for even the smallest of cars. Walking or bicycling is the best way to get around.

Houses, all meanings [illegible] uniformly planted in the center of a fenced-in, fortress checkerboard village. All houses are wooden, with steep-cross tile roofs with massive slopes and wide eaves, hungry to protect façades of sliding paper screens from torrential monsoon rains.

Tall, unusually strong, sturdy trees along fences, shielding houses from strong monsoon wind. Despite the poor and soil, a profusion of flowering plants manages to grow.

Authentic houses

Most of the existing houses are authentic. There are few instances of [illegible].

The uniformity of architecture and landscape is outstanding. Taketomi-jima has the rare quality of seemingly having been incredible island unity no longer seen in other places in the world.

It is a place of peace. An effusive and sympathy are abundant.

The island is so isolated that, rule the hardiest Japanese get shut for. I was probably the only non-Japanese there, thankful to have colleagues navigating the occasional [illegible] when non-accented. Little I was in a vacuum without a way to communicate with anyone. The experience was intoxicative.

Crossing there is not easy. Okinawa is the closest international air connection point. Ferries there to other another hour or so or fly to Ishigaki, the southernmost city in Japan. The last leg is the Taketomi-jima ferry which sails regularly from the city wharf.

The ferry is the island's lifeline. It depends on the vessels for all its supplies. Even water and electricity are piped in from neighboring Ishigaki Island.

Aside from having the largest power

BY JAH Tiongco

To see the works of Tiongco and Galura side by side is to witness a fellowship unfolding, forged in watercolor, rendered with profound skill and talent

Strong fellowship in still life

By Johnathan Librán Rovilla
Contributor

SHOWING STILL LIFE IS MORE OFTEN than not, a genre that presents problems for any artist. It is, after all, in quiet solitude that the artist achieves both communion with his subject and where, often painfully and inevitably, still life is transmuted to canvas.

And so, on the rare occasions that the most talented artists decide to embark, for example, in a collaboration between two artists with similar preferences in medium and still-life subject, the spectator is invited to observe both the resulting intersections and collisions with great expectation.

In the case of Gallery Blanc's "Variations on the Same Theme," featuring watercolorists Jay Tiongco and Alfred Galura, audiences are in for a visual feast of still-life's finest, interpreted in two distinct styles by two equally gifted artists.

Tiongco, 48, is the more experienced of the two, having started his career in the visual arts thirty years ago. Like Galura, he hails from humble beginnings. A musical difficulties forced him to drop out of studies to travel to other parts of the Philippines early in his career. Undaunted, Tiongco persevered and is now one of the more popular watercolorists in the local art scene, having exhibited in many of the country's top galleries.

Galura, 28, too, is no stranger to hard times. Two years ago he was an OFW bound for Hong Kong to support his family in the Bicol region before an [illegible] that before art, his true passion, finally called him home for good. In 2005, he won grand prize at the Kidlat ng Taliig annual watercolor competition. Today, Galura is a top favorite among many water color collectors.

Strangers to each other but familiar with one another's work, Tiongco and Galura were invited to create watercolor renditions of the same compositions of anthuriums, lilies, porcelain and flowers. The artists were then similar territory for Tiongco but not for Galura, whose earliest still lifes were copied from mail-order catalogs in bush [illegible].

BY ALFRED Galura

Stark contrasts

The paintings from the still-life sessions provide us with a ready to mark contrasts with realism artists suffering the inevitable comparison. In fact, Tiongco and Galura, through their collaboration, have given birth to a series of literary vignettes, different lens interestingly linked to one another, with meanings and connection best understood only in juxtaposition.

Indeed, to see Tiongco and Galura's works side by side is to witness a fellowship unfolding, forged in watercolor, rendered with profound skill and talent.

Tiongco's familiarity with the genre is evident in the delicate folds of his subjects, and in the quiet grace of his table arrangement of flowers, fruit and china. He employs techniques in acrylic and pastel toward viewers with the highest of honors we are treated, gently, as though in a whisper to partake of his feast.

Galura, on the other hand, renders a world he could empathize pleasantries. His palette of browns and green hues envelops his subjects with an organic aura that is at once full of visionary [illegible] moments of his much celebrated landscapes.

"Variations on the Same Theme" runs until 27 to Mar. 17 at Gallery Blanc, BM Arcade, 4/F Megamall. Call 6477502.

BY JAH Tiongco

Corcuera at Exchange Plaza, Art Ber
Borsoto and Javier at West, Serrano

TOP ADVERTISING ART DIRECTOR Gil Corcuera has decided to head for his third love, sculpture, since childhood. He holds his first one-man exhibit, "Equilibrium," at the Rockfish area of Tower One & Exchange Plaza, Philippine Stock Exchange Bldg., Ayala Ave., until Oct. 29. Here noted Painting in [illegible]

VISUAL ARTS

By A. Lucrecia Kasilag

Gil, 46, [illegible] began [illegible] artistically since playhood. Propelled by the wind, these sculptures swirl, warp and spin. Made of metal and wood, these are the kinetic sculptures demonstrating the physical law of balance in the form of [illegible] as the artist is the human touch. The pieces are organic shapes that are balanced with precision or law of libration, vertical they move constantly. Environmental negative forces, waves of wind, and [illegible] touch may be experienced. Corcuera's homes are collaborative, with pieces alternately entitled "Wind Keep," "Keeper" "In Payahan" and "Living Individually."

TOP FIGURE abstractionist Al Borsoto will open his newest solo, "Stimulus," on Oct. 24 at 6:30 p.m. at the Finnemanson Gallery, Ground Floor, Old Megamall. Borsoto, who finished fine arts cum laun at the University of Santo Tomas, continues the experimentation he is employing in his new [illegible] series.

Lawrence Ronaldo explores how the personality response is to be better in "Let's Get Physical," an show at West Gallery 4 SE West Avenue, QC on Oct. 29-Nov. 13. Ronaldo's paintings on canvas and on paper show off his [illegible]

"STIMULUS 101," by Art Borsoto

"SA PAG-IKOT," by Gil Corcuera

Tranquility," sterling Oct. 29.

BY GALURA

"SUPERMISTA," by Chico Antonio

Art exhibit-sale honors Doreen Fernandez

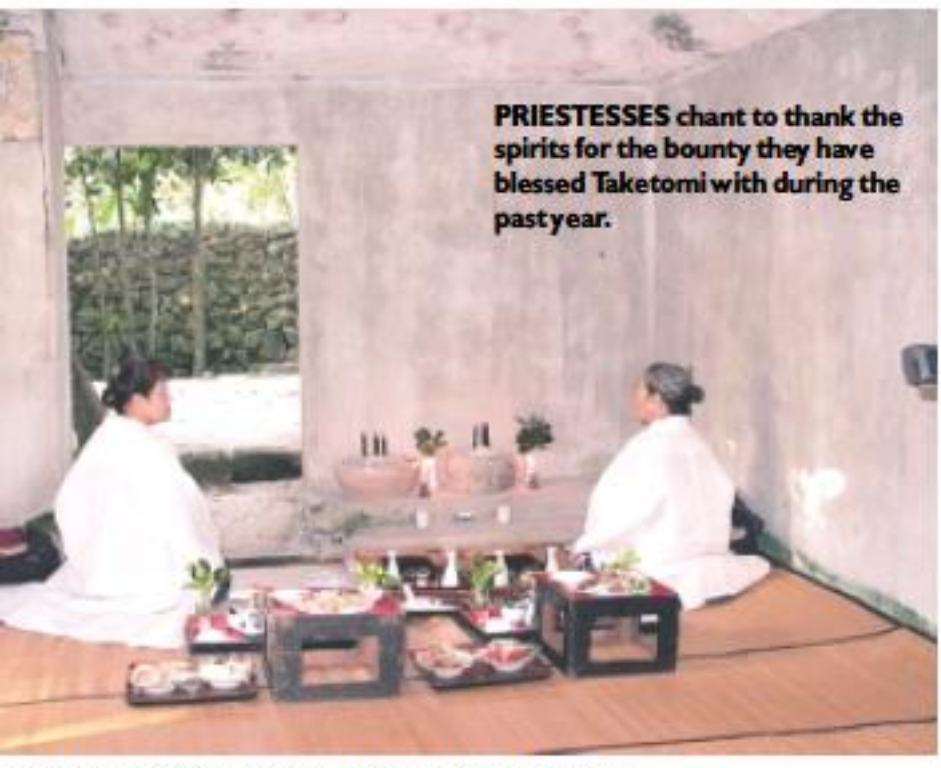
CAFE/E "ART FOR A CHAIR," [illegible] an exhibit and sale in honor of Dr. Doreen Gamboa Fernandez, until Oct. 28, at Triumph Building, 3616 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

The event is organized by the students and friends of the late English professor, writer and food columnist. Proceeds of "Art for a Chair" will support the Dr. Doreen Gamboa Fernandez Professorial Chair in the Humanities at the Loyola Schools of the Ateneo de Manila University.

The exhibit is open from Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. - 7 p.m. and on Saturdays, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. A memorial Mass will be held at 5 p.m. on the last day of the exhibit to mark Doreen's birthday on Oct. 28.

"Art for a Chair" features the works of artists of the Tuesday and Saturday groups, and features and Pilita artists, including Nestor Villanueva, Fernando Reta, Angel Cacnio, Andy Cobi, Manuel Tarie, Elmer Sanchez, Philipp Brin Nadres and Lanzo Bautista.

Call [illegible] 4334600 L/N2, [illegible] 4266002, or [illegible] 2042043 or [illegible] 7933884. Visit www.artforchair.com



PRIESTESSES chant to thank the spirits for the bounty they have blessed Taketomi with during the past year.

n southern Japan, Taketomi-jima
s on tourism, its other industry.
ts arrive by the ferry-load each

tions

v realizing that measures must be
to preserve its unique heritage,
mi-jima residents are asking, "What
ns when tourism and moderniza-
reaten an indigenous culture?"
idents carefully protect the rich
ry of their indigenous culture. Rit-
estivals, traditions and customs re-
alive through the generations and
ue to be performed in the original
er. Traditions are not diluted to
the tourists.
act, all tourists sensibly respect lo-
ditions. The islands promote cul-
ourism at its best.
ny generations of Taketomi-jima
nts continue to entrust their well-
to spirits who care for every aspect
r lives—their land, sea, mountain,
ts, health, relationships, and so on.
rits dwell in sacred groves, forests
secluded shoreline areas only ac-
e to priestesses. Ceremonies take
n an *utaki*, a small chapel near the
ce to each sacred place, where
esses perform religious rituals.
festival I attended gave thanks to
irits for the bounty showered on
mi-jima. Two days of rituals ac-
edged the past year's harvest of
n act that wiped the slate clean to
the asking for new favors during the coming year.

Priestesses prayed overnight in their *utakis*. People walked from one *utaki* to another bearing offerings.

At dawn everyone gathered in the main *utaki* for final ceremonies before breaking into a festival of traditional songs, dances and poetry which each person in the audience knew by heart. There was so much rapport in the Taketomi community at the festival, I felt I was intruding.

How, then, do strong local traditions survive into the next century in the face of modernization and tourism?

It helps that the Japanese government protects the physical, tangible aspects of Taketomi-jima, decreeing that none of the houses or the distinctive street pattern may be altered or demolished, nor can any new house be built in a nontraditional style.

The residents are determined to prevent their festivals, rituals and other traditional practices from vanishing. Should traditions ever vanish, what will be left of Taketomi is an empty envelope of well-preserved houses and streets without the traditions and practices that give them life.

From Taketomi, we learn that to keep a total picture of heritage for future generations, all its dimensions should be preserved—the physical and non-physical, the tangible and the intangible.

Feedback is welcome at afvillalon@hotmail.com

rmido at Renaissance, at Mag:Net

YELLOW Painting," by Jojo Serrano

ories used by mothers and nannies to
are the children to keep them safe at
me. Call 6341284.

GROUP of flight attendants and stewards
Philippine Airlines will come out with an
hibit on Oct. 27-Nov. 11 at the 2nd floor of
l Bldg., Nicanor Garcia Sr. St., Bel-Air II,
akati. The group is composed of Ramon
erulf, Ayna Riza Novorra Tan, Rafael Hidal-
Xavier, Mario Somera and Joana Regina
berto. Part of the proceeds will go to the
hesus Foundation. Call
03988/7269015.

M Epperson mounts "Open Light," an ex-
it of portraits, until Nov. 2 at the second floor, Museum Space of Ayala Museum, Makati. Call 7577117 to 21.

THE NATIONAL Museum presents "Inclination: Across Origins, Within Sight" until Dec. 31. Paintings of Juan Luna, Ramon Peralta and Martino Abellana mingle with video, installation, ethnographic and archeological artifacts and taxidermy. Call 5271215/5243005.

LOPEZ Memorial Museum exhibits the landscapes and drawings of Juan Arellano in "Juan Arellano: Drawing Space." The show runs until April 8, 2006, at G/F Benpres Bldg., Ortigas Center. Call 6312417.

ART Informal offers Fundamentals of Drawing workshops every Saturday, 2-5 p.m., until November. It's facilitated by Riel Hilario. Drawing the Head and Portrait is ongoing every Saturday, 9 a.m.-12 noon, until November. Free starter kits are included in the drawing workshops. Art Informal is located at 277 Connecticut St., Greenhills East, Mandaluyong. Call 7258518.

PAINTER-ART teacher Fernando B. Sena is conducting an art workshop for children 8 years old and above every Wednesday, from 8 to 11:30 a.m., for eight weeks, at the UP Vargas Museum. He will also hold another art workshop for children aged 6 years and above, facilitated by artists Marcelo Baldomar and Danilo Parungao, every Sunday, from 9 to 11:30 a.m, for eight sessions. The Sunday workshop will start on Nov. 13. Registration is ongoing. Call UP Vargas Museum at 9281927 or Sena at 3762196.

MCD Chan

The naked and the playing-dead

From page C1

Getting past 'Penis Talks 2's' risible psychology without cringing poses a big challenge

which is to say (in event of "Penis Talks 2," is not the fault of Chan's co-actors (but include Aly Mumalo, Lute Alasalg, Clarence Vasquez, Pedo Rosales, Pedo Rosales, Maggie Cortez, RJ Rosales, Rich Vergara, Bundle Flores and Joy Viado (assisted by nine bimbo wearing yellow thongs and billed jointly as the "chorus").

God knows saving on stage can be terrifying, but doing it in your barely-there undies must be hell. So, the lads, dear Brutus, is not in these stars, but in the material as conjured by the gilded team of writer Ricky Lee and director Joel Lamangan and PRO Chiongbi.

Credentials

These three gentlemen need no introduction. So here are some samples of what passes for wit, comedy and theatrical diction into the enunciation of words, but the quality of the text in "Penis Talks 2."

A nervous sperm (Rosales in loose, all-white pajamas and head wrap) cautious, slow-motion, the other sperm cells on the background music of Seagulls' "Diarists of Fire." He sees an egg cell (Flores, encased in an all-colette body suit and giant ball) and exclaims, "Wow, ayos na pare ang pinakamasaganang egg cell sa balat ng mga ito!"

They meet, they hold hands, they sing a medley of one-line snatches from various songs, beginning with "Fancy meeting you alone in the crowd" and ending with (to the tune of "Did Ye Believe in Magic?) "Can it's magic when two chromosomes fall in loooove."

Since Dr. Jesus is credited as the musical director and composer of the show's 25-odd songs, but the playbill doesn't say if he also wrote the lyrics. Whatever the libretto it must be in melem mood of romantic fiction: thus, The egg and the sperm cell each carries 23 chromosomes, screaming for the 46 chromosomes we all have. Females carry two XX chromosomes, males carry one X and one Y.

Comedy, camp, farce—they are no excuse for sloppy, suspect writing, for lines that float begin, or worse, that misdirect what is truly, provocatively funny with what is merely vaudeo. Especially in a show that has 'hoped itself' as a thoughtful if lighthearted examination of sexual issues not often talked about, in the manner of Eve Ensler's groundbreaking "The Vagina Monologues."

Salacious

"Penis Talks 2's" subconscious is hardly joking. Nowadays, any third-rate comedy has to dish it out, and with more playful sincerity. It's getting past the material's risible psychology without cringing that poses a bigger challenge.

We are supposed to laugh, for instance, at a line uttered by a clueless hermaphrodite (played by Chan) who, distressed at not having his/her period yet, says something unprintable in its crude original form but which roughly translates to: "I've even donated Aunical and passed all the oily discharge as my period!"

The show drags the character through all sorts of setups involving his/her dual sex organs. Differences, if you will, comes only in the form of a "bisexual" bank who makes use of both sexes, to the hermaphrodite's supposed fulfillment.

Sound relevant? We don't know but the gift, lazy way the material is handled inspires no excitement.

Characterizationally, after having named the character in bio, the vignette ends with/becoming boringly about the need for kindness and tolerance toward others seen as "different."

"Penis Talks 2's" dramatic design is clear by this time. Slap up the freakishness for laughs, then turn around to wax against bigotry and narrow-mindedness, trusting that the audience would be too far into the flesh parade to notice the hegemony of the high-minded sweeties.

THE PENIS cast of "All About Men 2... Penis Talks Reloaded!"

Bizarre number

An opening sequence has the clutched Sampaguita playing a hunchback xenophobe who, as the narrator helpfully explains it, is driven to seek solace in the morgue by constant social rejection.

Then, in possibly the most bizarre musical number ever executed on a total stage, the ensemble lines out to become upright sculptures while Sampaguita bumps their legs like a dog and sings, "Sa puntod ni Cupcake akoy humahalad, parang isang mahangin, naglalaway, nanaloy!"

But, really, "Penis Talks 2" is a meditation on homelessness. The necrophiliac is redeemed by the arrival of a unilever chat, for once, he learns to respect and love. So, one jam-ass corpse. An AIDS victim's corpse.

"Hirnara pa lang, alam mo nang namatay sa AIDS," intones the narrator. One more strike for **bad science. How do you identify by sight the** remains of an AIDS victim? By an Ash Wednesday mass on its forehead, perhaps, marking it as 13th position of Eve?

The necrophiliac, undaunted, embraces the body. Cut for the ensemble to wear themselves from cloth-like stupor and mouth, in 'sobrang pagbibigay," the "invigorating zeal" of the tale: "Wowag mangibago" and similar self-pleasuring cripe.

Banal parts

It would be nice to say the show's more serious parts play better, but they suffer from an affected banality.

The play's connection to "social relevance" is to turn necrophiliacs and hermaphrodites with abused children and OFWs—all shrouded with the broad, bulletized strokes that suggest Lee never touched his brain his suspension of easy stereotypes in writing "Penis Talks 2."

A weepy Mumalo gets to play an OFW accused of killing his Arab employer, in an agonizingly long segment better suited to "Maalaala Mo Kaya."

Already, meanwhile, apparently hoping to relive the acclaim he got from "Penis Talks 1" when he persuasively usurped the role of an abused child, sought to conceal the franchise by playing the same character, but now as an adult suffering from a mysterious case of erectile dysfunction. Wille 16 is cured only when he remembers his past and learns to forgive the father who violated him.

Same play

This is essentially the same play that got Lamangan the Aliw Award for Best Director for a Musical Play in 2004.

The genre is usually defined by the presence of an intrusive musical, and particularly vocal, score. That a collage of loose sketches with the barest music and singing in it could help to disarrow win over last year's true-blue musicals (Atlantis Productions' "Baby," Trumpets' "Mr. Suave's Big Boat," Steps Times,' Tanghalang Pilipino's "Himala, the Musical" and New Voice Company's "Cabaret") is, to put it mildly, a puzzlement.

"Steps, it goes without saying, succeed in part as monologues by their authors' ideas and stories," said the theater critic Hilton Als.

In light of its transient pedigree, and keeping the words in mind, "Penis Talks 2" stands as the 'bamboo' hunting" of all punishments.

"All About Men 2... Penis Talks Reloaded!" runs until Oct. 28. Call 725-9626, 725-9726, 374-1383, 410-3272, 893-1613 or 893-9999.

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